

# ANCIENT EMPIRES:

TITLE

ORIGIN, SUCCESSION, AND RESULTS.

WITH A PRELIMINARY VIEW

OF

THE UNITY AND FIRST MIGRATIONS OF MANKIND.

"The general design of *Scripture*, considered as historical, may be said to be, to give us an account of the world, in this one single view, as God's world; by which it appears essentially distinguished from all other books."—*Bishop Butler*.

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## PREFACE.

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IN the following work the chief empires of antiquity are contemplated in their rise, succession, and results, down to the Christian era. But, as preliminary to the review of these, it was felt desirable to trace the first streams of human history from an earlier point, and to mark the preparations for wider political combinations, or the early germs of great kingdoms, as indicated in the *only Record* which touches on that remote age—the condensed narrative of the Sacred Scriptures. The claims of the Old Testament Scriptures in this their *historical* character, and as the solitary but certain guide to our inquiries, respecting the first movements and settlements of the human family after the Deluge, appeared also to demand something of distinct notice and exposition. This has been accordingly attempted in a separate chapter, though without any pretension to exhaust a subject which has been less fully considered than its importance deserves. If it should appear that the review of the ancient Scriptures as history affords new circumstances of incidental proof of their Divine origin, the reader will not deem the discussion altogether foreign to the main design of the volume, which is to show how the whole of ancient history has a bearing, more or less direct, on the truth of Scripture, either as narrative, or as prediction. The preceding references will hence account for the introduction of the earlier chapters in this volume, and, it is hoped, may suffice to vindicate such introduction. These first chapters complete the review of ancient history, from its re-commencing point after the Deluge, and conduct naturally to the survey of the greater empires, which occupy the chief part of the work.

As the history of the *Jewish race* is that which more specially exhibits the grand purposes of Divine Providence in the ages preceding Christianity, and as the over-ruling control of Providence in *other* successive monarchies and empires is also particularly marked in the *effect of their interference*, age after age, on the fortunes of the chosen people, it became necessary to give some account of the *selection* and *destination* of this people, anterior to the review of the world's greater monarchies ; and further, in the subsequent notices of the latter, to resume, from time to time, the account of the condition and progress of the small nation in Palestine, which the *first* of the world's empires expatriated from its home, which the *second* restored and guarded in its native valleys, which the *third*, or the Egyptian monarchy derived from it, protected and preserved, to near the very times of Messiah, and which the *fourth* spared and controlled till after the career of Christ was ended, and beyond this, till after the full and wide promulgation of Christianity, when, the special purposes of its continuance in Palestine being completed, its own crimes caused it to be swept from the land, and devoted to a long dispersion. Hence the prominence which was demanded for the fortunes of this one people, even considered as subsidiary to a just account of the purposes accomplished, under the secret direction of Infinite Wisdom, by the greater empires of the ancient world.

The treatment adopted in the review of such empires is not formally, far less minutely historical ; yet the attempt in each case is made to present a complete, however general, outline of the rise, progress, and decline of the great empires which became the subject of prophecy, and which not only preceded, but, in their results, manifestly prepared the way for the spread of the Christian dominion, or the fifth empire of the prophetic vision. In the review of each empire, its story is pursued to its close and fall ; and such review would not have been complete without this. But the fall and overthrow of a preceding empire necessarily brings before us the chief aggressions and conquests of that

which followed. The fall of Babylon could not be related without reference to the conquests of Cyrus ; and so of the overthrow of the Persian empire by Macedon, and of the Macedonian empire, or its four surviving monarchies, by the conquests of Rome. Yet the story of each of these had to be taken up from its commencement, and hence the completeness demanded for the outline of each empire, necessitated something of repetition in the intermingling references connecting the fall of one great empire with the conquests and agencies of its successor. But this could not be avoided, except by running the whole historic review into the channel of a single narrative of merely general ancient history, which would have been inconsistent with the ulterior purpose of such review, that of making the outline of each empire a basis for reflection and inference, deduced from its own character and fortunes alone, and not from those of any other. For this object, the outline of each required to be distinct and complete in itself ; and, rather than sacrifice this precise and definite picture of each empire, it was deemed expedient to admit of the slight repetitions referred to ; which, however, it is hoped, will scarcely be felt as such, on account of the brief form in which the references are given to any successive empire under the review of its predecessor.

One instance there is of larger recapitulation, for which the reader's indulgence is requested. It relates to the spread of Greek literature in Egypt under the Ptolemies, and to its effect in necessitating the version of the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek, at a date nearly two centuries before the second great Revelation from heaven was given to the world. Such references to the Greek dynasty in Egypt were indispensable to the complete view of the revolutions of the kingdom of the Nile. But the same events necessarily presented themselves also, as results of the conquests of Macedon under Alexander ; and the omission under either head would have rendered the review incomplete. It is for the reader to judge how far the references have been given with such different bearing in each, as may, perhaps, have

guarded against the appearance, or at least the effect of mere iteration.

Some few words seem necessary, further, in explanation of the rapid sketch attempted of the rise of the Greek States, as preparatory to the review of the Macedonian conquests. It seemed to the writer that any just account of these conquests could not be given, without glancing to the formation of those states of Greece south of Mount Ceta, whose struggles with Persia had already weakened that empire and prepared its fall; whose progress and development in political power, in arts, in arms and civilization, created the wide and solid basis of Macedonian power, and the resources for its aggressive conquests; and whose civilization it was, and not that of Macedon itself, which the victories of Alexander diffused over Western Asia and the Nile. Without the preceding rise and power of these states, the formation of the empire of Macedon had been, humanly speaking, impossible; and certainly the chief result of the Macedonian conquests, extending to the Indus, in the diffusion of much of Greek civilization over the east, had been equally impossible. These considerations were, chiefly, the reasons for the place given to such review of the Greek states under that of the third empire of the world. The theme also was alluring; and it seemed a kind of ingratitude and injustice, in attempting the survey of the greater political revolutions of ancient history, to omit the fair though brief representation of that era of Greek development, which affected the civilization of antiquity more deeply and permanently than any other revolution, and whose effect is perpetuated still, in the influence of Greek literature on the speculations and culture of modern Europe.

In conclusion, it is right to mention, that the aim throughout has been, to exhibit the course and results of empires before the Christian era, in a manner adapted for popular reading. The whole, or nearly the whole of ancient history, is considered under the unity of a train of revolutions bearing, however slowly or distantly often, towards the one great result of a preparation for the introduction and spread of

Christianity. This view has required at each stage something of discussion, touching, however, only on the more obvious inferences suggested, while it is blended as freely as possible with historical allusion. On the whole, it is hoped that the work may prove of use to thoughtful readers, and may interest such in further meditation and research on the relation of ancient history to the sacred Scriptures, and to the times of the Christian dispensation.



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# ANCIENT EMPIRES:

## THEIR ORIGIN, SUCCESSION, AND RESULTS.



### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

Summary of general design of the work—to illustrate the rule of Providence, the verifications of Prophecy, and the preparations for Christianity. The world's history since Christianity wholly changed by it—And this fact a worthy theme of investigation—Suppositions regarding the continuing state of the world, had Christianity not been revealed—Whether superstitions perpetuated, or a general Atheism prevalent, with unrestrained sensuality and strife—The actual change and contrast wrought in the world's history by Christianity—But the course of human affairs, *anterior* to Christianity, meriting also consideration, in their relation to the history and predictions of Scripture—Inquiry how far the greater empires of antiquity involved successive stages of advance in the world's civilization—Whether, further, such revolutions of empire involved consequences favourable in the way of preparation for the promulgation of Christianity—Specific aim of the Treatise—A historical review of ancient empires considered in relation to these questions, with discussion and inference as to the results developed in each great revolution.

THE design of the following pages is not strictly history, nor even a summary of history, but a *historical review*, in which it is proposed to trace the course of the greater revolutions of the ancient world, from their original sources and springs, and to mark their succession and results, both, generally, in the advance of civilization, imperfect and doubtful as it was, and, particularly, as illustrating and bringing out to view a system of Providential rule; also, as exemplifying special and signal verifications of prophecy; and, further, as conspiring towards, and preparing the way, step after step, for the introduction of Christianity; for its proof, acceptance, and spread; for the introduction, in fact, of a new empire as well as faith—of that now dominant religion, which has confessedly changed the whole cast and aspect of the world's story since its arrival.

Evidently, the world's history exhibits a totally new aspect and character *since* the advent of Christ, and the spread of the Christian faith. It is not the same, nor anything like the same, *in the division of time after*, as it was *before*, the publication of Christianity. A new order of beliefs, principles, and purposes, has gained entrance into the world, and totally changed, at least in Europe, and in Asia for a time, the character of human history; has combined the nations of Europe in a new manner, pervaded them by a new element, and changed their social governing principles, in much essentially, in all ostensibly: and this change is still advancing, and not pausing.

Such a fact, or phenomenon, might merit, on the ground of its own intrinsic importance and interest, to be made the subject of philosophical inquiry in many points of view. One point of view would be the resulting effects of this new dominion on the history of Europe. These could be exhibited in contrast with the only two suppositions possible, regarding the course of human affairs, if Christianity had never been revealed. *First*, suppose the continuance of things on the *same level*—a perpetuation of the idolatries and contests of nations, and of the debasement of the human mind and character in ignorance and sensuality, as in the ages before Christianity was introduced. Or, *second*, imagine the change into some *other* condition, in which, without hint of the conceptions of Christianity, without one ray of its divine illuminations, or one particle of its influence falling on human thought, new superstitions had succeeded, or all had wholly decayed and vanished from the world, and given place to absolute, universal Atheism. Assume that combined with this, if in such a state society could be held together, and some form of civilization could exist, there should still be advance in human knowledge, power, and resources, aided by discovery, as of printing, the compass, the fine arts, the New World, and the Baconian philosophy. Whether, and how far, *such* advance would have been possible in the absence of Christianity, and whether modern Europe has not been indebted for its very science and the consequences of science, *indirectly*, to the prevalence of a pure faith, might justly be made matter of inquiry. But even assuming that the progress of discovery had been possible during the prevalence of superstition or atheism, or of the sensuality and incessant wars, ending often in despotism, and a wider



extent of human debasement or slavery, which would constantly ensue; it is certain that this civilization, educed from the effects of superstition or atheism combined with intellectual culture and the progress of discovery, would have produced a *wholly different world*, socially, morally, and religiously, from that which Christianity has created. It would be one evidently of portentous impiety, sensuality, contention, and ferocity, united with advancing knowledge, and an exterior semblance of refinement. The state of France during the revolution, of Rome during the proscriptions of Marius and Sylla, or of Asia and Greece in the struggles succeeding the death of Alexander, would give some faint representation of the successive annals of Europe, on the suppositions made, in the last two thousand years.

But this was not to be. The condition and character of humanity in Europe, and in other parts of the world, have been modified and changed to their very depths by Christianity. The world's history, after the era of Christ's advent, exhibits contrast and change, and that change still advancing. Christianity at its commencement presents, historically, a limit to the past, and a beginning to a new future in the world's condition and progress. Hence, as we said before, there would be afforded rich materials for meditation in illustrating its effects upon society, and in exhibiting, not in minute description, but in general outline, by the selection and display of the great ruling principles and moral forces originating with Christianity, the strangely different character of subsequent ages and revolutions in the world's history at large.

But there is another view of the fact of the world's change, as thus deduced from Christianity; and that is, the consideration of the world's history and its revolutions, *anterior* to the dividing limit presented by the Christian era. Christianity, independently of its Divine origin, and considered merely as a system of truth which has wrought so vast a change, might be examined in its relation to the world's preceding history, or rather in the relation which preceding revolutions in the ancient world may be found to bear on the introduction of Christianity. In other words, the inquiry would be a most interesting one, first, to ascertain what were the grand successions of events, of political revolutions, or of the empires which embody and make permanent such revolutions, that preceded Christianity; and next,

whether, and how far they conspired to prepare for it, or in any way contributed, under the secret direction of Providence, to herald the way for its advent. What *was* the course of the world's history anterior to that introduction of the Christian revelation, which has made its subsequent history so different? Were these revolutions many? were they important? were they permanent, at least for some ages? Do they exhibit an over-ruling Providence in their succession and development? Do they illustrate an advancing purpose in their permitted rise and sequence? Are they a series of revolutions in which there is progress towards some given point, either of unity for subsequent political combinations, or of some one revolution preparing for another of wider extent?

Further, as we should have to consider revelation in its ancient record, in its wonderful predictions, in its identification with the history of a Selected Race of men; how far do the greater revolutions of the ancient world run parallel, as verifications in numerous points, with the Divine history? How far do such revolutions affect the condition and history of the people to whom the oracles of God were given in charge? and how far do they illustrate and verify the express predictions of those oracles? Finally, to revert to the more important view already, in part, indicated, how far, if at all, did the revolutions of the ancient world prepare, however indirectly, for the era of Christianity, or for its more effective promulgation, notwithstanding such revolutions may have been, in principle and purpose, essentially hostile to Christianity? Can it be shown that such revolutions were successive waves in human history, tending to some greater final revolution—by successive extensions of political combination, and of empire—by successive forms of severe and agonizing discipline, preparing the human race to seek, or to acquiesce in a better hope;—by successive hearings on the relations of the Selected People, and the selected Land, in the midst of which Christianity was to appear to the rest of the nations and empires of the world; by successive extensions of connexion with great empires, and with the greatest and last, which made Judea an interior part of the Roman empire, and its new religion an intestine principle of moral revolution in the civilized empire of the world, and the language of revelation to become identified with that of the models of ancient literature?

It would seem that Christianity *was* thus related to the anterior succession of great events, forasmuch as these were made subservient to its advent, as truly, though in a different manner, as it stood related to the subsequent history of mankind. Can this be made evident? Was there a preparation laid for the Christian dominion, the fifth and last Empire of the world, in the preceding extension first of the European power and language over the east, and then in the identification of the sacred oracles with the diffused and perfect language of the third Empire? Did the fact of the origination and development of Christianity in the centre of the fourth Empire, under circumstances of publicity, and of foreign as well as domestic cognizance and hostility, insure its perfect test and proof? Did the subjugation of the chief European nations, and those of Asia and Africa, under the Roman dominion and in the unity of a single empire, by making transit by sea and land facile and safe, and by multiplying the communication between all provinces with the centre, and with one another, facilitate the diffusion of Christianity in a degree never possible before the establishment of the Roman empire? And if there *were* such circumstances of advantage, derived to Christianity from the preceding spread of the world's ancient empires, can it be uninteresting to trace and unfold these in a clear and detailed historic exposition?

Christianity, then, as a momentous event in itself considered, demands investigation in its relations to the preceding history of the world; or rather that preceding history would demand investigation in its relation to the coming age of Christianity. But still more, when Christianity is known to be of God, and the whole of the world's history to be under Divine control and superintendence, may we regard the revolutions of previous ages and empires as replete with materials of interest and instruction.

Thus, to sum up these remarks regarding the general object and purpose of the following work; we may state that the revolutions of the world antecedent to Christianity are intended to be reviewed rapidly in their character and results, as parts generally of the system of Divine Providence, as a series of events running parallel to sacred history, as verifications of prophetic statements, and as preparatory to the introduction, verification, and spread of the religion which has changed the face of the world, and which is that fifth final Empire whose conquests are destined to comprehend

all nations and kingdoms under the sceptre of Him whose right it is to reign.

The following pages, therefore, as we stated, are not designed to be a formal, however brief, history of ancient times; but neither will they consist of a series of mere comments or descants on history. If possible, the object is to make our review of the great period embraced by it historical in its spirit and character, while not always a formal narrative. This will be achieved by keeping steadily in view the order and sequence of greater revolutions, by constant allusion to the main changes and events of every age passed in review, and by selection of such commanding points of view in ancient story as may interest by their own character, and their bearings and influence on other changes. We may hope thus to be able to produce a connected chain of historic review, which, by the manner of exhibiting chief epochs or commenting on their import, may impressively illustrate the ways and truth of God, and the unfolding process of events towards a better time.

Perhaps it may hardly be needful to add, that while our aim is, by a process of clear and sound deduction, to exhibit Christianity as the dispensation predestinated and pointed to in the system of Divine Providence, as exhibited in the history of the ancient world, and thus to present its Divine source, origination, and authority, historically in a new and impressive light; it is our wish, in humble dependence on the Divine blessing, to make the historical review, at each crisis, subservient, as far as may be, to the impression of the *reality of the Divine rule in human affairs*, and of the solemn fact that all human actions pass under the observance of the Great Judge of all. Yet for such impression we must rely on the general tone of thought and feeling pervading the whole, as well as on the occasional distinct enforcement and exhibition of the momentous inferences presented in history. Any more extended, or more direct inculcation of religious instruction, we think it best to forbear, contenting ourselves with presenting facts in such relation, and bringing out their bearing to such an issue, that the reader may easily deduce for himself the more serious reflections they may suggest.

Our plan is thus somewhat novel and singular, and one beset with some difficulty in the attempt to steer at once clear both of the narration of history, and the disquisitions of mere specula-

tion; while something of the character of both is to be blended in an aim to sustain the graphic and rapid statement of history, combined with the argumentative enforcement of inference and reflection. Still, as it is distinctly conceivable that such a review of ancient times can be made a theme of deep interest and devout instruction, so it will be our hope by such plan to contribute at least something to the general evidences of Divine truth, as well as to impress the grander features of ancient history on the reader's memory.

## CHAPTER I.

UNIQUE CLAIMS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCRIPTURE  
ANCIENT HISTORY.

No credible informations of the ancient world anterior to about 600 B.C., except what the Scriptures furnish—Value of the knowledge of the past generally—Inquiry from what date upward the informations of profane history commence—Herodotus, period to which his history ascends—Our dependence for all anterior information, of about 3,500 years, on the Scriptures solely—Ignorance of the wisest heathen respecting the early ages of the world—Their theories respecting its origin—The Scriptures alone have dissipated the gloom—Characteristics of the historical element in Scripture—Amount of it in the Old Testament record—Design of the introduction of so much detail—Its character of simple truthfulness and illumination—Its reserve, at points where forgery would have invented—Its particularity of detail on other occasions, and the design of this—Third characteristic, its absolute form of statement—Fourth, its perfect illumination of thought in regard to Theism and moral duty—No progress in these subjects in revelation, the first views regarding the Deity being as sublime as the latest—Notice of the element which is progressive in revelation—Fifth character of Scripture history: that it is a history of the acts and interpositions of the Deity—Next, the light it casts on the story of mankind from the commencement, and in subsequent collateral notices of chief empires—Confirmations of Scripture history in ancient monuments and traditions; and later, in Herodotus, as to the conquests of Assyria and Persia, &c.

BEFORE entering on the review of the great revolutions which occupy the ages preceding the Christian era, it may not be uninteresting to glance at *the sources of information* which are available to the historian in his researches into that distant, obscure, and long period of human existence. And it will appear, if we mistake not, in the result, by enumerating and taking a just account of the very few historical productions which touch on that period, that the *record of inspiration* holds a position as conspicuous and invaluable, considered as the ancient world's *history*, in comparison with all other records, as it does, as the exclusive source of our knowledge regarding the dispensations of God. The first requisite of the historian is to ascertain what records, traditions, or monuments exist, in relation to any past age, which he proposes to treat of. Any writings it will be afterwards his business

closely to investigate, to determine their age and authenticity, their value in point of accuracy, the extent of times they respectively embrace, and the degree in which they illustrate and confirm each other, or in which they are confirmed by other monuments and traditions of the age reviewed. These records, and other remains of the past, constitute the materials whence alone he must deduce his narrative. Within the limits of this field his information must be gathered, and his investigations, conjectures, and inferences formed. All else,—the darkness of antiquity, where no hint is given, or the tales of fabulous times, which are manifestly incredible and inconsistent, must be to him as nothing, as pure vacancy, from which he must wholly avert his gaze.

With respect to the periods of ancient history, we may remark, that when the historian's researches embrace some selected period of time subsequent to the Persian invasion of Greece, his authorities are varied and ample, and his chief difficulty consists in collating and arranging the copious materials placed before him. But anterior to that period, his authorities, one grand record alone excepted, become scant and slender, and the conditions of investigation precarious, and by degrees hopelessly insuperable. This absolute, or nearly absolute darkness of preceding ages, in respect of secular history, we wish to place before the reader in a somewhat more distinct and emphatic manner than has been usual in adverting to this period in the story of mankind, that we may exhibit, with something of more just relief, the *claims of the Old Testament record as history*, and the unique and marvellous position it holds as the sole beacon of the older world. We think justice has not been done in this respect to revelation. We live in, and traverse past ages, from time's commencement to the record of Herodotus, in its light, but without distinct, or at least habitual advertence to the wonderful fact, that it is *its light alone* which gleams and spreads upward through these ages, that mere human record there is none, absolutely none, that informs us of the then world's movements, and that, but for revelation, the history of some 3,500 years would be an absolute blank, or a chaos of wild and conflicting tradition. Does even the believer and fond student of revelation realize habitually the preciousness, in this their historic, solitary brightness, of the simple narrations which occupy in such seeming disproportion, or even superfluity, the earlier records of the Old Testament? As our object is not

simply history, but something of thought and inference beyond history, yet based upon its facts, let us be permitted, in reference also to the materials of ancient history, to illustrate a little more fully the grand circumstance alluded to, of the historic value of the Bible, as the sole recital of the ages of the antique world.

Few persons advert to the value and need of traditions of the past world, whether recorded or not, whether definite, authentic, and full, or vague, dim, and broken, for the creating that sense of *illumination*, extended to far distant ages, which in a manner connects them with the present and the future, and constitutes *the historical and moral unity of the world*, as the unfolding and sequence of one mighty plan and story. From the earliest acquisitions of childhood, in Scripture history, and in the general annals of after ages, we are in such familiar and absolute possession of this knowledge of the past, that we think not of its wonderful aid in creating for us the very daylight of time, from its commencement to the present instant. Still less do we think of the fact, that to the Scriptures we are indebted for that light which discloses to us the antiquity, as also the origin of our world. To comprehend this fact in its full and unspeakable importance, we must imagine the *total absence* of this intelligence of the past, and that we of this time were cut off from all acquaintance with the ages preceding, and knew nothing of the anterior generations of our race, or of the state of this globe, except what oral traditions might supply to us respecting the latest centuries. How frightful the gloom thus spread to our apprehension over the ages gone! How desolate and appalling the shrouded aspect of antiquity! Conjecture in vain would try to evoke answer from the impenetrable darkness and silence which met our curiosity at every point. That curiosity of the human soul respecting the life of the beings that preceded it, would still be restless and insatiable, though ever doomed to disappointment and despair. In a word, under the circumstances we have for a moment assumed as real, the past, now comparatively luminous and familiar, like the aspect of our passing day, would be to us even more dark and incomprehensible than the future.

We strive now in vain to frame a conception of the course of human history for the next two centuries, and of the state of the world at the end of that period. In some main and vague out-



lines of progress, we might, perhaps, feel some slight confidence; but for anything definite in conjecture in respect to particular countries, kingdoms, and nations, their condition and their relative superiority, much more as to any minuter picture of things, we feel that presage is powerless and idle as the prattle of infancy, and that to Omniscience alone the light of a clear vision rests on the ages to come. But we are not apt to make the same reflection as to our knowledge of *past* ages, in the absence of all record or distinct tradition. Yet very nearly the same impenetrable obscurity would *then* intercept our communication with the past, as now veils from us the history of the future. That the fact, however, is *not* so; that we can ascend upward rapidly in thought along the track of past ages, till we arrive at the catastrophe which divides the descendants of Noah from the generations of an earlier world; and still further, that we can surmount that limit of awful change on the earth, and traverse the centuries antecedent, so as to come to the very origin of human existence, can gaze on the blest home and innocent state of the first created man, and catch a glimpse of the origination of the universe itself, and of the first holy dawn of time—all this is the invaluable bestowment of history, and the vastly greater, and more important and interesting part of it, of that history which was penned under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

Hence we should acknowledge the unspeakable value of even human record; and in the fact of its indispensable exigence, and its important function in spreading the light over time, we should recognise the Divine beneficence which gave man, as we confidently believe, the suggestion and knowledge of written signs, as it gave the faculty of speech itself. Let us, however, turn our thoughts to the inquiry, how far into the past secular history conducts us, at what limit upward its information ceases, and what is the extent of that remaining division of time, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to revelation alone. The comparison of sacred history, and the secular or profane, is in this view most interesting, and fraught with lessons for devout gratitude to the Infinite Giver of all good. And the general statement to be given on this subject, which of course the intelligent reader already anticipates, is, that profane history ascends no higher in any credible form of information than the sixth century before Christ, if we may not rather fix its limit much lower.

The earliest historian, of those at least now known, or whose works remain to us, is Herodotus, the beautiful annalist of the ancient kingdoms of Asia, and of those more memorable conflicts of Greece with the Persian power, which came nearer to his own time. This historian was born at Halicarnassus, in Caria, in the year 484, B.C., about five years after the battle of Marathon. He read his history, if we are to believe Lucian, at Olympia, during the celebration of the games, when he was about forty years old; and again at Athens, during the Panathenæa; winning on each occasion unbounded applause and admiration from the vast assemblies, of whose ancestors he recited the noble deeds, in their defence of Greece against the hosts of Darius and Xerxes. Thus the period of the probable composition of this first of profane histories, may be placed about the year 450, B.C.; while the limit of any facts, clearly and indisputably ascertained by the history, cannot be assumed higher than some 150 years earlier, which carries us back to the reputed times of Solon in Greek history, and of Cyrus in that of Persia. Not that we mean, that many of the greater events, of much earlier occurrence, recorded by Herodotus, are to be deemed fabulous, but simply that they do not rest on the same historical authority.

The main facts of the life and institutions of Lycurgus, the legislator of Sparta, cannot be deemed fable; and the presumed date of these is placed about the year B.C. 825. Yet, for their reality, the chief authority must have been tradition, supported, perhaps, by existing laws identified in his own country with his name. They related to events placed more than three centuries before the age of the earliest Greek historian, and must have seemed to him situated in a dim and distant scene of the past. What, then, we may ask, was the aspect which that far-receding past bore to the inquiring thought of the historian, in respect of the condition of the nations generally? It was one of perplexing obscurity, which exhibited some few facts mixed up with the fabulous and the confused story of gods and heroes. Anterior to the historic period, we have the age represented in the poems of Homer and Hesiod. How far the traditions of the Trojan war are based on fact is yet a question hotly contested. Admitting the reality of the chief event, the expedition of the Grecian chiefs against Troy, the highest credible antiquity of this would be only about 1,000 years before Christ, or the age in which

Solomon reigned. Thus a period which seems a comparatively modern era in sacred history is, in the traditionary story of Greece, the limit or border territory, where mythology and some remains of real history are commingled.

To conceive of the shortness of profane ancient history still more distinctly, the best method is to transport ourselves in thought to the very age of Herodotus and Thucydides, and, guided by the very general intimations their pages afford, ask what was the aspect which antiquity bore to *their* view, how far upward the light of truth and reality seemed to disclose the past, and where it faded into uncertainty or became utter darkness. Herodotus, from having gleaned the more ancient traditions of the great Asiatic kingdoms, as well as those of Egypt, exhibits in respect of the chief revolutions in Asia a higher antiquity, though, as to any particular events, definite and well attested, its limit reaches not beyond the age of Cyrus, or about 600 B.C. With respect to Thucydides, who but briefly glances to the early history of the Greek races, his account represents them as a scattered population at no very remote date, and as subsisting by mutual plunder and piracy. He further emphatically alludes to the limited extent to which historical certainty reached in the past. Such, then, was the near boundary, to the view of these historians, which credible tradition presented, and so vast was the division of time anterior on which utter darkness rested. What could these earliest annalists of human events tell, with certainty, of the world's state three or four centuries before their own age? They had hearsay traditions of ancient empires in Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt, and they were cognisant of some ancient monuments which attested the greatness of those kingdoms; but of anything beyond a brief succession of names of kings, they could gain no certainty. Some of these monuments have become intelligible only in our own time, in the sculptured remains of Nineveh and of Egypt. But even the information supplied by these, were they all deciphered, would not add much to our knowledge of the remote past, as they consist chiefly of series of names of kings, and are liable to much question, not as to their antiquity as monuments, but as to the authenticity of the lists of monarchs given.

Imagine, then — to place this question of the scantness of ancient history, apart from the Bible, on a more definite issue—

imagine for a moment the *Scriptures unwritten*, and that none of the intimations it gives respecting the past had survived amongst the Jewish race; how much, we ask, would there be known to us of the world's history anterior to the sixth century before Christ? What would be the conclusions we could frame respecting the antiquity of the human race itself? What deductions could be formed respecting ancient empires anterior to the time of Cyrus' ancestor, Deioeces? There would meet us traditions of a deluge in various countries, but what definite conclusion could we arrive at by comparing and combining these? And of the ages preceding this catastrophe, what would be the theory which philosophy would be entitled to frame? What account would it adventure to give of the origin of the human race, or of the universe itself? We know what theories the acutest minds in the Greek States *did* propound; and these theories give the best results of human speculation in the absence of the sacred oracles. And we speak not now of questions of religion or morals, but of various theories intended as explanation of the world's antiquity, or as a substitute for a history of the origin and early condition of man and of the universe. We meet the fancies and conjectures of Thales, Anaximander, Aristagoras, Aristotle, Plato, and Epicurus, exhibiting a succession of the best efforts of the human intellect to give a probable account of the origin of the universe and the human race; in other words, to frame a history of that past which presented to them an aspect of such impenetrable mystery. Some held the world eternal, some that its atoms only were so. Some believed human souls to have had a preceding existence; and some that man was sprung, none could tell how, from the earth. Some believed in One Infinite Mind as the Supreme Governor of all things; and some in gods many, of the heavens, the sea, and the dry land.

As to the particular origin of man, and the progress of the race during the dark ages of antiquity, they could affirm nothing with confidence. And this ignorance of the past continued, on the minds of the heathen world, down to the very time of the promulgation of revealed truth by the missionaries of the cross. We see it in Cicero, in Virgil, and Horace, as we see it in Aristotle, Plato, and Epicurus. The researches of the first in all the learning of the past, joined to his own best and profoundest meditation, advanced him not one hair's-breadth further than the

illustrious inquirers of three centuries before him. Cicero can affirm nothing clearer or more definite, as to the world's or man's origin, than Plato could affirm. For Virgil and Horace, brilliant as were their intellectual endowments, bright and clear as were their perceptions of human life considered as actual and passing before them, penetrating as was the glance of the Satirist into the arcana of human character, and well as he could touch upon all its varieties and faults; when these gifted intellects turn their gaze to the ancient past, they exhibit the same helpless ignorance, and the same humiliating superstition, as the very meanest of their countrymen. Who made the world? How was the world originated? Had it a beginning? How long had man existed? What was the history of the ages before the traditions of Nineveh or Egypt? What before the time of Cyrus? On all these, and on similar questions relating to the past, Horace, Virgil, Cicero, could affirm nothing. The past, anterior to the limit mentioned, was a mystery to them, almost as the *future after death* was a mystery; and we thus see, in this situation of the human intellect in the absence of revelation, the touching picture of human spirits, gifted with highest capacities and attainments, unsurpassed in penetration, in sublime fancy, in eloquence, in command of language; competent to speculate, discourse, or sing of the present, of the human aspects of the passing world; but, smitten with instant perplexity and infatuation the moment they avert their gaze to the remote past, or to the final future of man's history. Let it be remembered, we again request, that we speak not now of their want of a true theology, but of their want of *history*, in regard to the ancient condition of the world. And as this ignorance represented the furthest advance, on these questions, of the human mind, in the absence of revelation, so we find, in the conceptions of such men as Cicero and Virgil, the limit to which *our own age* could reach, under the same conditions of inquiry. In other words, setting out of view the sacred oracles, *we* should have been at this day without a history of the early ages, anterior to the dates already intimated; and philosophy and research would, in our own time, have been baffled by the same questions as those which Horace hopelessly or recklessly abandoned.

At this point, then, it is that the *historical value of revelation* comes before us, in all its unspeakable excellence, as the indispen-

sable complement of human knowledge in relation to the ancient world. It is to this revelation we are indebted for that quiet of spirit which we feel, in unconscious advertence to the furthest past ages of time, till they touch on that eternity which no created intellect may explore. The daylight shines on all the past, and no questions, or but comparatively minor ones, remain to perplex us. But who is it, that thus recognises the value of Scripture ancient history? The whole civilized world has accepted its informations, and even infidel philosophy partakes of the illumination, unable to substitute a better solution of the origin of all things, and the early process of the ages; although without acknowledging its obligations to that record, which is the sole source of the light that beams on high antiquity, and but for which philosophy, at this day, would still have been at the beginning of its task in solving the problems of human existence.

Students of the sacred Scriptures are apt, sometimes, to wonder at the *amount*, and the *occasional minuteness and detail*, of the historical part of the inspired volume. Rightly deeming that the grand design of a revelation was to disclose the purpose of redeeming mercy, in the advent and death of the Son of God for sinners, to unfold the way of salvation through faith alone in his name, and to enforce the obligations of a new life of holiness; such readers are tempted to think at times, that the historical details, especially of the Old Testament Scriptures, are almost superfluous, and are so much waste element intermixed with the precious ore of higher truth, and detracting from its genuine worth and effect. But the fact is not so. No part of Scripture is without its importance, not even the minutest details of incidents, or of names and genealogies. All of Scripture was written under Divine superintendence; and while the higher mysteries of revelation, relating to the glorious purposes of the Deity in the work of redemption, and, in fact, all but the series of human events recorded, were given by the express revelation of the Spirit of God, even that series of apparently insignificant events at times, has its place in the sacred record under the direction of the same Divine influence. Historical details are there by design, by the prompting of unerring wisdom, and are adapted to answer important ends. One of those ends would be the authenticating, by details of life-like reality, the supernatural interpositions intermixed with the history of Patriarchs, and of their de-

scendants, the chosen race of Israel. Another purpose achieved by these early details, is the unfolding the ways of Divine Providence in the deliverance of God's servants, and the overthrow of their enemies. But another great end, and a high and indispensable one, was to *furnish a history of the chief early revolutions of the world*, and of the very origin and first condition of man; wanting which, there would have been no history of some 3,500 years from the world's beginning, and we of this time should have been left to frame what suppositions we could out of the pages of Herodotus, and the fabulous traditions of various nations. The *historical*, then, we repeat, is an unspeakably important and *indispensable element in the Inspired Record*.

Let the reader give us his attention further, while we endeavour to *characterize* briefly this element of the historical in the Scriptures, and chiefly, as our design demands, in its more ancient division. Considered as history, it is marked by characteristics which impress on the mind, not only the truth of the subject matter, but the Divinity of its origin, the higher wisdom which at all times directed, controlled, or, in the grand earlier portions, prompted its informations. Considered generally, and as a whole, what an aspect of truth, purity, and simplicity, the ancient history of Scripture wears! Who ever reads it with a feeling of doubt, or fear, or perplexity, as to its absolute truth? Is not *this* the instantaneous and unquestioning impression given forth by its pages? Does it not read like the narrative of things to which we seem to be in a manner present? Is there not an inimitable *reality* spread like daylight over its record? Nor is this impression, we are persuaded, the effect of early associations and education. On the contrary, we feel confident, the result is much the same, when the pages of Scripture are submitted for the first time to the inspection of an unbeliever or heathen, provided they do not purposely prepare themselves to resist such impression.

This is the aspect of sacred history, considered in itself, and *generally*; this is the solemn impress of truthfulness it wears, in the first general view of its wonderful narrations. But its singular character and claims cannot be judged of fully, without considering it *comparatively*, in relation to the times of its undoubted origin, and in contrast with the early traditions and conjectures blended

with profane history. The ancient history given in the Old Testament, in its chief portions, the five books of Moses, and the book of Job, which also has its brief human story of a remote patriarchal time, was written without question some 1600 years before the Christian era, and its other historical books, at intervals in succeeding periods. We will confine ourselves to the books of Moses at present, and ask the reader to consider the ancientness of these, and to contrast in his thoughts the darkness resting on all the nations besides, with the daylight which shines in the Mosaic record. This record was penned in the remoter antiquity when the world was still thinly peopled, when the human race was spreading westward to Greece, Italy, Gaul, or Britain, or eastward towards the Indus, and when tribes were struggling in fell collision for homes or for booty. Full a thousand years before that time beyond which Herodotus could trace nothing with certainty, and where a thick obscurity perplexed his view, were books written, which read neither like the infantine products of Hindoo fable, nor like the wild traditions of barbaric fancy; which are far enough remote from the inventions of Greek mythology, and tell nothing of the contests of gods and heroes; but which reveal a scene of antiquity so touchingly simple, and faithful to nature, so sober in its tone, so rich in mature wisdom, so solemn in its reflections, so lofty in its views of the one eternal Deity, that this earliest record reads like the experience of every day in its pictures of human feeling, and shames all mere human speculation in its views respecting the Divine perfections. This was the date of the writing of the earlier books of Scripture history; such was the then state of the world; and such is the contrast of its pure narration as compared with the foolish traditions of all other nations.

If we consider the history of Scripture further, as it is in *itself*, independently of comparison with other pretended accounts of antiquity, we shall perceive that its characteristics are such as not only silently attest its truth, but such as mark in a degree its Divinity. Some of these *characteristics* are the following. In the first place, there is a certain *reserve* noticeable in the record of events before the Deluge, which is not only at the furthest remove from the creations of human invention or conjecture, but also from the fulness and detail, which would be natural and



inevitable to a historian writing under the impulse of his own feelings of wondering interest and curiosity in the themes before him. How striking the austere and awful brevity of the annals given of the time before the Flood, comprising a space of some 1600 years! What a scene for more ample invention, if the historian gave these first accounts from his own fancy! If he invented the whole, what prevented his inventing vastly more, and crowding the antediluvian period with fictions of heroes and their achievements, surpassing the wildest creations of ancient poetry or tradition? If he, on the other hand, sought to relate truth, and if for his information he was dependent on mere traditional remains of the past, how is it that such traditions were so brief, and so unmixed with fabulous achievement? But even admitting that Moses derived the chief outline of events from preserved memorials of the ages preceding, whence is it that he intermixes no thought or sentiment of his own with the history, attempts nothing in the way of conjecture, expresses no wonder, but rapidly drops the veil over the secrets of the ancient world? This reserve would not be natural, perhaps not possible, to the human historian, even under the sternest regard to truth, when left to the sole impulse of his own feelings. In fact, for this brevity and reserve characterizing the antediluvian part of sacred history, there is no accounting, except on the true supposition that the historian wrote under the control and guidance of the Divine Spirit; so unlike is the whole cast of the narrative, not only to mere invention, but to the manner of honest research, when left to pursue its own method of conjecture and statement.

Besides this character of reserve, which seems to put an arrest on the mere human tendencies to conjecture, or more ample detail; the narrative of Scripture, both of the period before the Flood, and of the patriarchal age, and the ages following, is marked by a minute and specific *particularity*, in reference to persons and events, here and there, which attests the possession of *express information* on the occurrences related. Detail is avoided in respect of innumerable topics which human curiosity would naturally have ventured on, and at points where, but for a Divine restraint, the historian would not have failed to introduce conjectures or traditions, in the absence of positive information.

But again, detail, even to domestic minuteness, is given on

selected points of the narrative, announcing, by this very particularity, the absolute knowledge given to the historian, and the reality of every slightest incident which he records. And the particularity of the Scripture narrative is as far as possible from the mere crowding of detail, which invention might multiply, or tradition furnish. Mere invention betrays artifice by the union of lifeless generalities, or of circumstances having in them nothing exclusively and inimitably appropriate or consequent, as is ever the case in real life. Tradition, again, reveals its genuine source and character, by its perplexed and confused aspect, through the intermixture of truth and falsehood, of distorted fact and manifest improbability. Hence even its details cannot give the appearance of truth. In contrast with these, let the element of detail in Scripture ancient history be considered; and, we ask, what is the character of this detail? We answer in a word—it is that of life and nature; it is a picture of occurrences, actions, feelings, purposes, which bears on the face of it an irresistible impress of truth.

Thus Biblical history is as remarkable for its *detail* as for its *reticence*; for what it minutely paints in its main course of narration, as for its brief allusion or utter silence in earlier parts. Yet its very earliest portion shares with the subsequent parts in the admission of detail, on one or two unspeakably interesting events. The process of creation, though in one sense described in general summary, yet is given with distinctness and order in the grand *succession* of its wonders. The picture of man's first state in the garden of Eden, though brief, is marked by particularity. With still more touching particularity are we informed of the occasion and circumstances of man's fall, and of the first awful result of it. Reserve and brevity, yet broken by brief gleams of detail, mark the narrative of the generations before the Flood; and, in the relation of that catastrophe, we have the combination, at the same moment, of both elements of reserve and of minuteness. In the references to Noah's life, preaching, and preparation for the forewarned visitation, we have minuteness showing to us, in relief against the dark ground of the world's impenitence, the piety and conduct of a single person; and still more minuteness in the preparation of the ark, its very form and dimensions being given, and in the assemblage and entrance of the animals; and finally, in the entrance, with

*date given*, of the patriarch himself and his family, and his being shut in by Divine command. We have all this information respecting God's servant given with minuteness; but this is in immediate contiguity and contrast with the awful silence which the history observes regarding the whole of mankind besides. What a field was here presented for invention, if invention had fabricated the Bible; what opportunity for imagination and conjecture; what incentive to the historian's speculation and research, if left merely to the impulses of the curiosity natural to the human mind! Whence this absolute silence, this want of all allusion to the misery and wail of myriads in their last retreats on mountain summits, and their last struggles with the overflowing sea? Whence, but from the arrest put upon his recording pen, perhaps upon his very thoughts, by the secret Divine restraint which guided him?

The particularity exhibited in sacred history, in the period subsequent to the Deluge, is still greater, revealing to us the minutest occurrences in the experience and movements of the patriarchs, and afterwards in the life of the first historian himself, in the story of that mighty deliverance, which he was appointed to conduct, of the chosen race of Israel out of Egypt, of their pilgrimage in the wilderness, and their final arrival on the borders of the promised land. Such minuteness becomes again still more detailed in the history of the conquests under Joshua, and in the record of the national vicissitudes and deliverances which took place while the nation yet subsisted as a republic, or union of tribes, under successive chiefs or judges. The story of the first Hebrew patriarchs, the picture of strife and its results, in the slavery and elevation of Jacob's favourite son, the incidents of Moses' birth and adoption, and of his subsequent sojourn in Midian, are examples of history concentrating its regard on single families and persons, and dismissing the notice of mighty nations then rising to greatness with only brief allusion. The question here arises, wherein lay the utility of such minute details in the inspired record? Does it not seem in disproportion and excess? Or is there some use, of surpassing moment, discernible in this element of detail; and may the Divine history be thus vindicated, in respect of the presence, or even prevalence of that element which may at first seem to detract from its dignity, and interfere with its grander purpose

of displaying the successive dispensations which prepared the coming of Messiah?

We think it important, in this account of the character and claims of Scripture history, of that only record which tells the story and unveils the state of the ancient world, to have called the reader's attention to its constituting elements of detail and brevity, and to attempt to illustrate the use and significance of each. Of the indirect proofs of the Divine origination and truth of the record, afforded so impressively by its brevity and reserve at many of its stages, we have already spoken. We have shown that a narrative so abstinent and pure of conjecture or speculation, so sternly reserved and silent, or solemnly brief, at many points, could not have originated except under the influence of that Divine Spirit from whom it claims to have proceeded; that influence which, regarding the past world, supplied the information to the historian, and which, regarding the events of his own time and experience, still directed the selection and recital of his remembrances. So far do we feel we may confidently deduce proof of the Divine origin of Scripture history from its brief and passing utterances, on occasions where human curiosity would have been fain to speculate, and imposture would have found ample verge and room to invent.

But it will be said, the *other* constituting element, present in Scripture history, is the exact contrary to the former, and how can it be interpreted to sustain the same inference? If the *reserve* of the ancient Scripture narrative tells, by this silence, of its Divinity, how shall the *opposite of this*, how shall the profuse *minuteness* of the patriarchal annals, and of those of subsequent periods, be shown to indicate a Divine purpose? In answer to this question, though we have already alluded slightly to the subject in a preceding page, we request the reader's attention to the following remarks.—First of all, before we show the use, and vindicate the importance of the detail referred to, it is necessary to take account of its precise *amount*, relatively to what was omitted, and of the special occasions on which it is given. This will reduce the minuteness of Scripture detail, in the fair and just estimate of it, to a comparatively small amount, and thus the remaining consideration of the difficulty is made more simple and intelligible. Let it be remembered, then, that the details of the earlier books of the Old Testament, while in the *record* they come

in crowded succession, and seem aggregated to excess, are, in truth, only brief passages of patriarchal story, whose occurrences are often very widely separated, sometimes by intervals of many years, and sometimes by intervals of centuries. For example, we read the narratives of patriarchal life in immediate and rapid succession, without adverting to the fact, that these are rarely continuous in time, from chapter to chapter in our present arrangement, but are *selected portions* of such life, touching on its most important vicissitudes, and deemed, therefore, worthy of being preserved, by a Divine interposition, for the remembrance of after ages. But their amount in each case is very small in comparison of the whole; in other words, of those years and incidents in each patriarch's life which are *unrecorded*.

Think how much of the history of each of God's servants, in that ancient time, is unknown to us, veiled in the oblivion which covers so much else of the ages past. We have, of the history of Abraham, which extended through a period of one hundred threescore and sixteen years, only a few pages, telling us of his obedience to the first Divine call, of his sojourn in Canaan and in Egypt, of the reward of his faith in the birth of Isaac, and of its trial in the command for his death, on Mount Moriah, and one or two other important events in his history; and the impression we naturally, and perhaps inevitably acquiesce in regarding the years omitted, is, that they must all have been uneventful and insignificant. But how do we know this? To infer this from the absence of allusion to them in the history, is to proceed on the assumption that the intention of such history was to include *everything* interesting or important in the life of this patriarch, of which intention we have no evidence whatever. That the design was to give knowledge to after times of such events as were most needful, and most instructive, we may justly assume on the primary fact that the Divine wisdom guided the mind of the historian. But we can infer nothing more. It is not credible that all the unrecorded years of that venerable patriarch's history were listlessly passed, without affecting incident, or without occasional vicissitude and change. In a word, as we have, in respect of the life and teachings, and the innumerable miracles of that Divine Teacher, a descendant, according to the flesh, of this patriarch, who in an age so long after him trod the vales of Palestine, only the *briefest selections and memorials*,

where the church of God would have devoutly desired to have had the whole, if that had been possible ; so in respect of all the Characters introduced on the scene of the sacred record, we have but the gleanings of their lives, though these gleanings include events, generally, of critical importance in the development of the Divine counsels, and unspeakably interesting in themselves.

This then is our first statement regarding the seemingly profuse details of the earlier Scriptures. They are *fragments* selected often at wide intervals in each instance, and made to form part of the historic chain of events which illustrate the *continuity of the spiritual church of God* from the beginning, and the incessant action of a ruling providence, more or less open, for its protection and progress. Thus the church of the latest times can glance back to the remotest names that bore the chief share in its former perils ; yet, but the chief of these names are given, and, in connexion with each, only a few of the more memorable occurrences. There is no break in the continuity ; but while details are given, they are in a proportion inconceivably small, compared with the infinite mass of incidents left in oblivion.

Our next remark upon the minuteness of many single portions of detail, in Scripture ancient history, is, that it not only illustrates the manner of the operation of Divine Providence, but that it exhibits the incontestable proof of *the reality of Divine interferences, inseparably blended with their effect* on human belief and conduct in living history. The details of the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers exhibit the life of the patriarchs and their successors in a light of reality which it is impossible to dispute. But much of that life, or rather, we may say, the whole of the patriarchal life, and of the first period of the Hebrew national life under Moses—its feelings, aims, hopes, and movements—is in immediate relation to a higher power, and is the *express effect* either of Divine command, of Divine promise, or of Divine miraculous deliverance—or rather, of all these inseparably combined. Thus the human life embodies, and is interwoven with, the Divine element. The reality of the Divine cannot be doubted without denying the reality of the human history. But the reality of patriarchal life no one, in reading its history, can by any effort disbelieve. And what is it which gives this stamp of actuality, of absolute fact, to such history ? It is its *detail* evolved in a consecutive, natural, consistent chain of motive,

feeling, and action. Thus its grand ministration is internal proof of ancient miracle, as attesting the reality of a human life, which was in its great principles and movements *the reflex and result* of a perpetual Divine interference in the affairs of time.

We have thus attempted to illustrate the seemingly contradictory attributes, assigned by us to the ancient history of the Bible; its reserve, and its copious fulness. The contrariety is but apparent. The reserve and the detail *do not touch on the same periods or instances*. There is reserve at one time, there is detail at another. There is reserve, where was ample field for speculation or invention, as in the long ages before the Deluge—a space of human history extending to some sixteen hundred years, yet compressed by the historian, with a Divine brevity, into a few pages. There is, again, in reference to periods nearer his own time, a singular minuteness, detailing incidents in the home life of patriarchs, and giving the very words of their discourse or devout prayer. And, as we have shown, there is reserve maintained amid the apparent copiousness of detail. Though this circumstance is scarcely ever adverted to, there was infinitely more left out, to sink in oblivion, than was selected for insertion in the sacred record. So that a reserve controls and limits each narration, and reigns amidst the whole of Scripture history, interposing intervals of silence and vacancy in innumerable places along the progress, from the Deluge downwards. And both the reserve and the detail fulfil, as we have seen, each its function, ministering to the same proof of a Divine origination in the record; the one by its restraint on the historian's thoughts, the other by the gleams it throws on the living experiences and conduct of God's servants, and sometimes of his foes, and these as being *incontestably affected and controlled* by supernatural interposition.

Another character strikingly borne by Scripture history is its *absolute form of statement* as the record of fact, and not of the historian's speculations, conjectures, or inferences. It is no disparagement, but the contrary, to any history, that where the author has had no access to veritable records or proofs, he should give his account of particular events as hearsay, or as conjecture and probability. And it is highly interesting to mark, in this respect, the varying degrees of confidence, with which the earliest ancient writer in profane history gives his relation of occurrences.

Generally Herodotus assumes the simple form of direct and positive assertion, but at times he introduces his account of some matters as traditions or as general opinion, with the formula, "They say," or, "The learned among the Persians or Egyptians affirm," adding occasionally his assent, or his distrust, or his general estimate of the credibility of what he is about to relate. Not that where he assents there is always safe ground for such assent, but it is at least a characteristic of this oldest Greek historian's manner; and it gives an impression of his general aim to represent as certain facts, only what were such, that he informs his reader as to the degree of confidence to be attached to parts of the narration. But the contrary of all this distrust meets us in the manner of the sacred historians, both the most ancient and those of a later age.

In the Scripture history, amid its incessant introduction of miracles and Divine interposition, there is no hesitancy nor diffidence even thought of, nor any consciousness betrayed of a mind struggling itself to believe the grand marvels related, or as if anticipating distrust and difficulty of assent in those who should read them. Nothing of all this; but there is present the perfect opposite, not only of diffidence or apprehension as to the effect on other minds, but even of surprise or effort to impress surprise or conviction on others. Every event, every transaction, every mighty display of God's power, every awful manifestation of his presence, is related with the same direct manner of certainty, the same simplicity of statement, the same unconsciousness of fallibility, as is felt by any one in telling of objects or events at the instant present before his eyes. There is a distinct manner and feeling attaching to the utterance of what we see, or of what we as absolutely and simply know, as what we see or have seen. This is the simple, unheeding confidence of the Scripture history. Nothing is given with divided conviction, nothing as merely probable, nothing as possible to be gainsaid, or even questioned, in all after time.

Furthermore, there is yet an *absence of the tone of assertion, or of emphasis*, even when the historian is engaged amid the overwhelming wonders wrought by the outstretched arm of the Almighty. The recital is still simple, and quiet in its progress, as if only the merest human incidents were recorded. Now, with respect to this calm and unastonished manner of sacred history, both from



the pen of Moses, who records the miracles which introduced the first dispensation, and again from the pens of those who beheld, *in the last great period of miracles*, the Divine attestations of Christianity, it has often been remarked, how singular an internal evidence it affords, in each instance, of the truth and Divinity of the narrative. But we do not recollect, that any writer has dwelt upon that uniform quality, pervading *all* Scripture history, of its simple, direct, and in a manner *unconscious confidence*; a confidence unconscious, *because based on knowledge*. This is the certainty which pervades, and compacts the sacred history. It is an absolute whole of Divine truth, considered in respect of this its all-pervading, yet unintentional tone of certainty. Such a tone, pervading equally all the compositions bound up in the sacred volume, compositions spread over some sixteen or seventeen centuries, and proceeding from writers in varying circumstances of life, and in differing conditions of society, can be accounted for only on one supposition, and that is, the absolute knowledge given or authenticated by the Divine Spirit, or, the personal observation and experience afforded to these writers, of the clear, daylight reality of all facts, minute or astounding, which they received a Divine impulse and commission to relate. Admit that they *had* this internal attestation, or were thus present witnesses of the wonders they record, and that they wrote under the infallible direction, the controlling restraint, of the Holy Spirit, and the result in the product of such a narrative as that of the Scriptures *is accounted for*; but if this supposition of spiritual influence, and perceived certainty be set aside, the very *composition of the Scriptures* will yet remain a miracle to be accounted for, as wonderful to all minds competent to judge of it, as the host of miracles which its history narrates.

In these comments on the more conspicuous qualities of the sacred Scriptures as history, it is far from our design to discuss at large the claims and evidences of revelation theologically, however true it may be that we have occasionally glanced at these questions. Our present concern with it is as *history*. As such, it is the *sole* record of the ancient world, down to nearly the time of Cyrus. This ancient history presents to our notice certain peculiarities and claims, just as the nine books of Herodotus exhibit certain characteristics, more or less affecting the question of the credibility of their narrative. If it be useful, and even

necessary to enter upon such preliminary criticism respecting other historical compositions, it is also fair to advert to the characteristic qualities marking the most ancient writing in the world, nay, the sole ancient record of the first 3,500 years of the world's progress, and one, in comparison of which the oldest of the Greek histories might be accounted a modern performance. Let it then be kept in mind, that it is simply in this, their character as history, that we have thus commented on the Scriptures, in these introductory observations. Their claims, in this distinct point of view, have not often been considered. The inquiry cannot be denied to be a highly interesting one, or to be such as to result in valuable inference, as, we think, has been already shown, in favour of their Divine origin, as well as unerring truth.

Resuming then our criticism on the ancient history of Scripture, we wish to call the reader's attention, further, to that *perfect illumination of thought* which pervades it, on the two great subjects, of all that can be named the most momentous to be understood, namely, those of *Religion and Morals*. Putting out of view, for the moment, any higher ends, designed in a revelation from heaven, and considering the historical books of Scripture simply in that character, and so comparing them with other ancient histories; what absolutely just and perfect conceptions are blended with their *earliest* notices, regarding the unity and perfections of the Deity on the one hand, and on the other regarding moral duty, in all human relations, as well as the obligations of piety, in the worship and service of God! It is to be particularly remarked, that the presentation of these is *inwrought with the history of Scripture*, and that they are inseparably identified with it; so that they claim notice as its pervading spirit, as its informing element. They are not formally proclaimed or inculcated at the beginning; yet they are *present in its first grand announcements*. The solemn declarations given 2500 years later from Mount Sinai, are but the collected summary of views and principles, which illuminate the first record of man's creation, and innocence, and fall. How wonderfully different are the simple first pages of Bible history in this respect, from those of the most intelligent heathen authors! There is in the Bible no darkness, no vagueness, regarding those primary principles of theology and morals, which even Deists hold to be alone true, and worthy of the Supreme Being. There

is nothing of the confusion and inconsistency, much less the mythology, which is blended with other ancient history.

But the point specially demanding remark is, that these just views regarding the Deity, and the worship due to Him alone, as well as those of morals generally, are quite as clear and definite *in the first parts of the history*, as in its latest pages. It is a great mistake to imagine that in *this* respect, there is any thing progressive in the Old Testament Scriptures. There is nothing like an advance of thought, as from Polytheism to Theism, or as from Anthropomorphism to Spirituality, in the conceptions given of the Divinity in the Bible. With the unity of the Deity as the Infinite Spirit, the Omnipotent First Cause, the system of thought in the Bible commences; and on this theme, the sublimest songs of Isaiah, or the brightest conceptions of Daniel when he prayed in his open chamber, exhibit no additional intelligence to that shared by our first parents in the garden, or by Enoch, or Noah, or Abraham, or Moses. The illumination on those questions, we repeat, is perfect at the commencement, and we feel in reading the first pages of Genesis, that we are *in the presence of that same Infinite Jehovah*, whose works and dispensations are unfolded in subsequent narrations. The conceptions of the unity, spirituality, omnipotence, and of all the various moral attributes of the Deity which, though not formally announced, are manifested in the historian's narration of the creation of all things, and the formation of man in the Divine image, may be confronted and attested by *other compositions of the same writer*, and by those of *another writer* of his own age, or perhaps of an age still earlier. We refer to the sublime songs of Moses, such as that given in the 90th Psalm, and to the book of Job, whether written by this last patriarch, or whether, as some suppose, composed by Moses, while still in the land of Midian. In these writings, we have conceptions of the Deity more formally announced, and more sublimely unfolded; and they are such as no subsequent writers of the Scriptures surpass. But *these are the conceptions of the inspired writer of the book of Genesis*, and of another writer, if the authorship of the book of Job be distinct, who participated with him in the same illumination. Wherefore, these last also are the conceptions, by implication, present in the first pages of Scripture history; and they are such to which its latest pages profess to add nothing.

Let us here be well understood. We say that a perfect illumination rests on the first historic pages of Scripture, as on the last, in respect of the nature of the Deity, and of moral duty; and that, essentially, there is nothing progressive in the conceptions subsequently presented in revelation on these subjects. On *other* subjects there *is* a progressive revelation. In respect to the mystery of the Trinity in the Godhead, there is a more perfect revelation in the New Testament; although in the names of God, and in some peculiar constructions of speech, there is in the books of Moses a distinct indication of even this mystery, such as to be preparatory for the ultimate informations of the gospel economy. Again, in respect of the plan of redemption, and the person of the Redeemer, and of the whole economy of the final redeeming dispensation, there is progress; and at every advance we gain additional knowledge, till at last the Son of God is manifested in the flesh, and the doctrines of his atoning sacrifice and mediatorial kingdom are testified, unfolded, and enforced. In these successions of dispensations, we have the progressive in revelation, but *not* in the grand fundamental principles of Theism and Morals.

The necessity of guarding our statement from misconception, has compelled us to enter upon a fuller discussion on these interesting questions than would else have been attempted. Our wish was to impress *the identity of character pervading revelation*, and manifest in its history, in respect of the grand first principles of true religion, and that a perfect illumination on these brightens its first announcements. Hence, we may now proceed to remark, what *elevation of thought*, and what purity characterize the narrative from its commencement. Not only have we no tradition, or fable, or conjecture in the books of Moses, but we are awe-struck by the representations they afford of the power, the holiness, justice, and yet the goodness and mercy of God. And these come upon our view *historically*, in the narrative of the Divine acts, and of the *very words* of the Almighty, spoken from time to time to his servants.

Hence another superlative advantage which the ancient Scriptures possess historically is, that they not only exhibit a continuous series of chief events from the very beginning of time, but are also a record of the Divine interpositions, of an extraordinary and preternatural kind, which took place in the history of the

world in the ages preceding the Christian era. Of these, but for the Old Testament history, we should have known nothing. Assuming the reality, in ancient time, of such visible interferences of Divine power, in a manner so unlike the awful reserve, if we may so speak, in respect to any similar manifestation of the Supreme Ruler during the centuries that have elapsed since the apostolic age, the knowledge of such phenomena is unspeakably important; and for this knowledge we are indebted to the history of Scripture. That they were, in the greater number of instances, blended with the story and fortunes of one particular people, detracts nothing from the interest attaching to them, since they were still interpositions of the Eternal *in this world*, and in the scenes of time. Besides which, they were designed to exert, as they have manifestly exerted, an influence ultimately on the history and condition of all other nations. The world's destiny was bound up with the fortunes of that chosen race, for whose deliverance and preservation supernatural events were wrought. Moreover, all of the *earliest* Divine interpositions recorded involved the destinies of mankind as a whole; and when the period arrived for such supernatural interferences to be confined mainly to the channel of one people's history, yet they had their bearing, also, on other great nations around them, which had sought their destruction. Thus the miracles of ancient record, considered in their narrower sphere as deliverances of God's people, were yet public events involving, retributively, the condition of the mightiest nations of the period of their occurrence. In a word, neither the history nor the miracles of Scripture are of confined scope or bearing, however strictly they were designed in their special purport to illustrate and advance the fortunes, at one time of single patriarchs, and further on of the descendants of those patriarchs, after they multiplied and became the heads of nations.

The story of Abraham's life conducts us among the chief of the early kingdoms then formed, or then only in their commencement. It casts its light eastward, on the early combinations and germs of empire taking place in the plains of Chaldea, on the Tigris, and Euphrates. Southward, we follow the footsteps of the patriarch among the cities of Phœnicia on the Mediterranean, and to Egypt, already a mighty kingdom, though yet probably but few of its pyramids had been reared, and its cities were slowly multiplying along the banks of the

Nile. The account given of Isaac and Jacob cast the same collateral notices on the other countries round, and at last, the history stations us in the midst of Egypt in the age of her mightiest greatness; until, at length, the wonders wrought for Israel's deliverance involve also the chastisement of Egypt, and the overthrow of her armies on the shores of the Red Sea. The conquest of Canaan which followed, and the settlement of the twelve tribes in that land, in like manner affect, or rather entirely change, the history of the other races which had preceded them, forcing their retreat on towns along the coast, or on the fastnesses of the southern hills of Palestine. If we follow the history of the Hebrew race further down, to the period of their monarchy, then to their disunion, to the captivity of the ten tribes, and, after a long interval, the captivity of Judah and Benjamin, last of all, to the restoration of these two tribes by Cyrus, it will instantly be perceived, that the story of this one people is yet not their story alone, but is intermingled with notices of the chief kingdoms and empires which rose to power in the Eastern world. It is blended with the whole course, we may say, of the revolutions of the ancient civilized world in Asia, down to the times of Cyrus, while the kingdoms of Europe were yet in their germs. Hence, also, we may remark, the Divine wonders wrought in behalf of Israel were not things done in a corner; they were not events wrought on the narrow theatre of Israelite history alone, but, touching continually on the condition of neighbouring nations, they had a wider bearing and publicity, and became part of the more general history of the ancient world. They were, to other nations, a sublime succession of interpositions from the unseen world, wrought by the Divine arm, to humble their pride, to punish their oppressions, and to rebuke their idolatry.

In the observations already made on the history of Scripture, we have touched on some of the chief characteristics of the sacred narrative, and have shown its supreme value as the only record of the ancient world for the first 3,500 years, and its unspeakable importance as containing the notices of miraculous interpositions through the whole of ancient time. It has also been shown that the ancient history of the Bible is not of confined reference, but that it has perpetual collateral allusion to other nations, and is thus, in an important and comprehensive view, the history of

the world in its early civilization. It touches on all the chief ancient kingdoms and revolutions from the remotest antiquity, and has preserved of these all the information necessary for tracing the whole course of human affairs, from the very dawn of time. And in the sacred volume alone have we this light shed on the remotest past. In the absence of this record, we should have had to weary imagination with conjecture, or to accept the monstrous chronology of China or of the Hindoos; while the very traditions given by Greek historians, or even the fabulous age depicted in Homer, would ascend no higher than the comparatively modern and familiar period of the psalmist and monarch of Israel.

Admitting, then, the value and claims of revealed history in these respects, it is an interesting question, whether any *corroborations* of the sacred narrative are supplied by the existing monuments of antiquity in eastern countries. Records, we perceive, the ancient world has none, but what the Old Testament furnishes. No *histories* have come down to us of Nineveh, of Babylon, of Egypt, or of any other primitive kingdoms. The earliest recorded references to those named, out of Scripture, are those of Herodotus, who wrote but a short time before the canon of revelation was terminated and closed. If, however, no profane history reaches higher, as to its historic proof and credibility, than 600 B.C.; if all is dark and silent in that channel anterior to this period, there may have been *monuments of human labour or art*, which, more durable than empires themselves, may have survived, to give token to later ages of the existence of cities and empires. And such is the fact. With the mighty remains of ancient structures in Egypt, the world had long been familiar, even from the more enlightened times of Greece and Rome, when those monuments were, even then, considered as remains of a remote antiquity, and filled the beholder with the same awe and wondering with which they are contemplated at this hour. But, in our own time, an immense addition has been made to these discoveries regarding the ancient world. Remains of that most ancient of cities on the Tigris, which was a ruin when Herodotus wrote, a huge mound which the Ten Thousand, in their retreat northwards under Xenophon, gazed on as they passed, have been, in a manner, disinterred by modern research, and sculptures, old as the times of the patriarchs, brought to view,

and even placed under our eyes in this far Island of the west. These remains are in part hieroglyphic; and both these, and the earlier discovered monuments of Egypt, contain indications, though but slight and obscure, of events which marked the times when they were formed. What, then, is the testimony which these monuments afford? Do they, in their faint and few indications, corroborate, or do they contradict, at the points of possible comparison between both, the written narrative conveyed to us from an age contemporary with these monuments, by the inspired penmen? The reply is, that they are uniformly, and often strikingly corroborative; and that at every advance made in explorations, and in the science of deciphering ancient remains, new evidence is afforded of coincidence with the sacred narrative. As we shall have more expressly to notice these remains of Nineveh and Egypt in subsequent chapters, we only mention them here as it respects the general corroboration they afford, of the only written history that has descended to us from the primitive ages of the world.

Besides the monuments of human art referred to, we have to consider the import and direction of the chief, the more consistent, and more general and constant *traditions* of antiquity, and to determine how far the testimony of these also blends with the record of Scripture. While admitting that the traditions of ancient nations, for the most part, soon recede into the fabulous, and thence into utter chaos, yet some main circumstances of tradition stand separated from what is evident fable or poetic ornament; and being met with in the traditions of different nations, and in different and distant parts of the globe, they claim attention as the probable representations of fact. While we have to set aside the clearly inconsistent and monstrous in chronology and fable, we must think, that *some* authority is justly due to other allusions given in the traditions of the ancient world. These, then, would constitute a second order of corroboratory testimony, derived from remote ages, and in the channel of various nations. Let whatever amount of circumstance seems to have an air of consistence, or probability, in these traditions of various nations, be selected from the mass of their fables and monstrous mythology; let those general intimations be combined, which have a place in perhaps all traditions; let, also, any peculiar and more definite point in the traditions of any particular people



be noticed ; and afterwards let the whole be carefully studied, so as to determine its best meaning, and its historic weight : this process will give us, though still only in a loose manner, the general amount of the traditions of antiquity, both in their informations and their authority. The inquiry will then arise, how far any such constant traditions, to be met with in the past, fall in with the references of Scripture history. And here, as in the former case of the monuments of human art, we discern the same general coincidence with the more explicit informations of the sacred volume. Amongst all nations, for example, traditions are handed down of the origin of the human race from a single pair, of the perfect innocence and happiness of man's first condition, of the destructive catastrophe of a deluge, of the division of time into weeks ; and if we descend lower, to what may be deemed the period of historical traditions, which relate to the settlement and revolutions of particular nations, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Medes, and the Arabs, the coincidences become still more numerous and more express. These remarks will suffice as indicating, generally, the species and amount of inference to be gathered from the loose and confused traditions of antiquity, and the general bearing of such inference as corroboration of the sacred narrative.

With respect to the earliest *histories* of the ancient world, next after the period embraced by those of the Old Testament, we need offer but one or two observations, as their general character is sufficiently familiar to the reader. The chief of these are series of the Greek historians, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Diodorus Siculus, &c. ; and after them those of Rome. The most interesting circumstance to remark is, that profane history commences from the point, very nearly, at which sacred history in the Old Testament terminates. Herodotus wrote his history in the year 445 B.C., which is about the date when Nehemiah, the latest of the Scripture historians, composed the memoirs which bear his name. It is true that the series of events comprehended in the narratives of Herodotus, commences from about the eighth century before Christ ; but it is evident that only from the times of the elder Cyrus, is he able to affirm anything with confidence, or with competent information. In all that he relates of times preceding, such as his account of the ancestors of Croesus king of Lydia, or even those of Cyrus himself, he can only be supposed

to repeat the more current fables or traditions that had reached his own time. The historic age, as laid open to us in his works, is that of the conquests of Cyrus, and the formation of the great Persian monarchy. These had sufficient notoriety to constitute a firm basis for history; and from this point downward, the historian's informations become more and more definite, ample, and clear.

For about 150 years, therefore, a period which will include the conquests and reign of Cyrus, of Cambyses, Darius Hystaspes, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes, the Scripture history, and that of Herodotus, have *an identity as to time*, and both narratives become connected also by their common relation to transactions and events in Persia. In respect to this interval of coincident time and general subject, the narrative of Herodotus is invaluable as an attestation of the chief events, first, predicted in earlier Scripture, and then, in later centuries, alluded to more or less directly by the sacred writers, regarding the downfall of Babylon, the formation of the Persian monarchy, and the defeat of Egypt. There may be other minuter points of coincident statement or allusion, on which it is not necessary here to insist. We only refer to the chief and more important revolutions of the age, in which the later Scriptures and the earlier profane histories run parallel; and the interesting fact that the latter, whenever they touch on events also comprehended in Scripture prediction and narrative, furnish the most striking attestations of the fidelity and accuracy of the sacred historians.

We have now finished our introductory review of the ancient history of revelation, in its claims, its characteristics, and its attestations. Our object has been to exhibit the historic element in the revealed volume, in its defined place, and its unspeakable importance and exigence. We have shown that we should have wanted all knowledge of the first 3,500 years of the world's existence, but for the history supplied in the sacred volume, and that an impenetrable darkness would else have rested on the condition of man through these ages. This exigence the historical narrative of the Bible meets in such a manner, as to pour the light of certainty on the track of centuries upward, till we ascend to the very creation of man and of the universe. It seemed important, after this, to attempt the exhibition, however imperfectly, of the chief characteristics which distinguish the sacred

volume, considered simply in its history, and to show how these while marking its inviolable fidelity, as a record of actual events in the remotest past, are significant, in the most striking manner, of a higher wisdom than mere human research and judgment, having originated or controlled the history, in what may seem even its least important details. These characteristics we noted as reserve, where human curiosity and invention would have run wild; and again, minuteness of detail in later portions, which, blended with the supernatural, pictured forth the living reality of patriarchal, and even of national life, as controlled and modified by the supernatural, and inexplicable and impossible without it. The other qualities referred to were, first the positive, truth-felt tone and manner of the narrative, indicating the consciousness of perfect knowledge and certainty in all that is affirmed; and finally, that perfect illumination of thought, which pervades it from its sublime commencement, regarding the true nature and perfections of the Deity, and regarding all moral duty and religious worship; in which, as we showed, there is nothing progressive, the first conceptions being as elevated and noble as the last; though there is progress in the dispensations of the Deity, till the fulness of time, when the Messiah appeared, and died to atone for sin.

Having shown the need of Scripture, as the world's ancient record of chief events, and its Divine, as well as absolutely unerring character, we noticed further the extent of time which sacred history comprehends, and how its later annals touch on the very period where profane history commences. It is impossible not to remark a Divine destination in this circumstance, that the continuity of the world's story should have no break, especially when combined with the fact, that sacred history, all along its track, takes account of collateral events in the chief revolutions and changes occurring among the nations and kingdoms of antiquity, besides its more continuous narrative of the fortunes of the one people to whom were entrusted the oracles of God. Thus, the ancient history of Scripture is continued, till the exigence for it, as history, in any general form of allusion ceases, and till civilization in other nations was so advanced, as to lead to the construction of written annals. Herodotus carries forward history from the time of the Persian empire, where the later annals of the Scriptures conclude: We have shown how, upon the interval

of these last ages, where Scripture history and profane occupy common ground, the latter lends the most distinct and striking confirmations to the former, and illustrates in the most signal manner, the verity both of the predictions and the narrative of revelation. Finally, in this chapter we have also shown how the monuments, and some of the chief and more consistent traditions of antiquity, lend the same general confirmation to the historical notices of Scripture.

Having thus reviewed, at much greater length than we intended, the historical part of the ancient sacred record, and glanced to the other chief sources whence we derive our information of the ancient world, we shall proceed to exhibit, in successive sketches, the chief phases and revolutions of antiquity, and shall endeavour to display their part and bearing in the system of Divine Providence, as well as their converging effect upon the period when Christianity was to be promulgated to the world.

## CHAPTER II.

ORIGINAL UNITY, AND CHIEF EARLY DISTRIBUTIONS, OF  
THE HUMAN RACE.

Interest attaching to the incipient streams of human population—The present spectacle exhibited, of diversity of nations and races, and the difficulties hence suggested—Yet the primary fact to be maintained, the original unity of mankind—Proof of this—1. Absurd consequences of its denial, that there must have been numerous distinct centres of human creations, and these creations demonstrably recent; further, that such creations must have greater probability than the fact of gradual migration and the modifying effects of climate—2. The comparative recency of the human population demonstrable by the law of its increase computed reversely—3. The difficulty as to widely severed localities completely solved by the later discoveries of geography—4. Lateness of authentic history, and of sciences and arts—5. Varieties of human speech considered, and proofs of their original identity of stock—Illustrations of identity in single words, and in the structure of languages—6. Decision of eminent physiologists as to differences of human complexion, face, &c.—Effects of climate—Instances of much diversity in European races—7. Identity of the properties of man's intellect and moral nature, and striking illustrations of this, afforded in the experiment and success of Christian missions—Scripture account of the origin of mankind after the Deluge, from one family, express and absolute—Supreme value and interest of these notices of the first ancestry of nations—Confusion of tongues—Its limit as confined to tribes or families, and its effect in compelling dispersion—Reserve of the Mosaic narrative in this period, as proof of the historian's inspiration—The Japhethite migration towards Asia Minor and Europe—The Pelasgi and Teutones—European traditions of early migrations from the East—Settlements of the Hamite families in Central Asia, Syria, and on the Nile—Settlements of the families of Shem, east of the Tigris in Elam or Persia, towards the Indus, and in Mesopotamia, &c.—These settlements apparently fortuitous; yet effected under the control of Providence, and still enduring verifications of prophecy.

In a general review of the course of ancient history, it is a point of some interest to remark the first streams of human population, as they issue from the fountain-head, part into various channels, and proceed in various directions. At a very short distance from the source, in the family of the patriarch who survived the Flood, we can mark the beginnings of the chief divisions of races and nations, and follow the direction of migrations and settlements:

And here again we have to refer to the invaluable service rendered by Scripture history, in the brief notices which are given of those chief families in Noah's descendants, whence what may be called the world's second history, or groups of histories, take their departure. Assuming these notices as perfectly authentic and unerring, as far as they go, what a deep interest attaches to the fact, that we are in possession of the very *names of the remotest ancestors of the nations* that now have spread their numbers on the earth's surface, and no darkness, but the light of day rests on the early condition and movements of the human race! And this precise and unerring information the Bible supplies, and the Bible alone. Whereas the earliest histories among various nations date from fable, or from chaos, the inspired record of Scripture furnishes the distinct steps of the life of mankind from its origin, and supplies the very fact which was necessary to account for the differences of human speech, and the abrupt dispersion of the once single people into various directions, to form distinct settlements, and the germs of races and nations. The chapters which mention these first changes and names are brief; yet as a record, throwing light on the remotest antiquity, what an indispensable place do they occupy in the history of mankind!

No further attempt will be made in this chapter, than simply to trace the general outline of the first migrations and distributions of mankind, as far as they seem to be indicated in the book of Genesis, and to notice the confirmations which are afforded to its chief statements, by the traditions of various nations, and still more emphatically by modern researches, in the discovery of ancient monuments, in the study of the varieties of the now different races of man, and in the still more important study of the differences, yet the reconciling analogies, discernible among the myriad languages of the human race.

In contemplating mankind at the present moment, or at any anterior point within the range of general history, the spectacle presented to us is that of *differences* apparently inexplicable—differences of race, of even the human face and aspect, of complexion, of speech, of physical tendencies, of religions, customs, civilization, leading passions and pursuits; and further, a wide and vast diffusion of locality in human settlements, comprising the two hemispheres of the globe, over distant and widely separated continents and islands, the vastest of which were not known

to the civilized world till about three centuries ago, and some not till within the last century.

In the view of such appalling diversity of physical conformation, language, religion, habits, and situation on the earth's surface, exhibited in the present divisions of the human race, questions and doubts have arisen as to the possibility of its derivation from a remote single human family. How can the various nations now upon the earth be resolved and traced back into unity? What possible basis can there be for affirming the intellectual European, with his lofty forehead, and a countenance flashing thought, as of the same original parentage with the natives of New Zealand, or the Bushmen of Caffraria? Can the Black be of the same race as the White? Has the brutish gabble of the Hottentot anything in common with the classic languages of Europe, ancient or modern? Can Fetish worshippers be of the same intellectual conformation with the enlightened Theist, to say nothing of Christian illumination? How again could the most brutish of races have traversed seas, and formed settlements in continents and islands, divided by thousands of miles from the Old World, and which it is now the very triumph of navigation and science to have discovered and reached? Such are the startling difficulties which have been felt and urged on this subject of the unity of the human race, contrasted with the present palpable varieties of races, their utterly different and incommunicable modes of speech, and the occupation of such distant continents as New Holland or South America by savages, whose highest art reached no further than the hollowing of a canoe, and who had no other guide but the stars in crossing oceans.

Yet the *primary fact* in the history of mankind, on which the believer in revelation must take his stand, is the *Unity of the human race*, and the derivation of all tribes and nations, whithersoever scattered on the world's surface, from the patriarchal family which alone survived the Flood. Nor, even apart from the positive testimony of revelation, and basing our conclusions on the results of scientific investigations alone, is the demonstration of that unity so difficult as the first aspects of the question might lead us to imagine. We shall accordingly endeavour to place before the reader those general views which, in spite of the diversity referred to, conduct the scientific inquirer back to the unity of the human species, and to harmony with the account given in the Sacred

Scripture. The chief considerations we shall have here space to advert to are—the utter impossibility of establishing the contrary supposition; the general tradition and assent of nations in respect of one common ancestor; the recency of all authentic history, and of arts and sciences; the essential identity of man, amid all lesser differences, in physical structure, and intellectual and moral faculties; the traces of a common origin discoverable in the elements and analogies of all languages; and, lastly, the susceptibility of religion, and of moral elevation, ascertained in the experiment of Christian missions, on man in the lowest and most barbarous condition ever presented to view. We shall not attempt to discuss each of these formally, or at any great length; but a brief exposition of the argument on this important question seems necessary, and due to the general subject, while it cannot fail, we think, to have some interest for the intelligent reader.

The whole strength of a proposition, based on preponderating evidence, is never fairly tested, or its convincing impression felt, till the import and consequences of its *contrary* be fully explored and contemplated. What then is the inference we must be prepared to maintain, if the common origin of humanity be disputed? It will not be permitted the antagonist of revelation to stop short with the mere denial of one proposition, and say he is not called on to account for the origin of the species, or indeed to attempt anything, beyond the negative of the assertion made. The requisitions of *truth* demand *more* than this; for of two assertions on any given question, one must be more probable than the other; and if some affirmative be rejected, its contradictory is, in that very denial, assumed as the true. It is the constant practice of the opponents of revelation on every question, as it might seem their best policy as mere cavillers, having proclaimed their objections and denials, to shrink from anything further, deeming the controversy at this stage ended. But as an affair of determining where the truth lies, it is not, and cannot be thus ended; and this, every intelligent reasoner well knows. In the case before us, if it be affirmed that all nations did not spring from one origin, we must assume many distinct originals of the species, and as many distinct and independent creations of man, in various parts of the globe. *This*, then, is the assertion which infidelity must, we will not say, attempt to demonstrate, but at least show to be *that* account of mankind, which has the prepon-



derance of evidence in its favour. On this hypothesis, the European races have a distinct origin, the Asiatic another, or perhaps two or three others, and those of Africa one or two more. There was the creation of man, and that in a period demonstrably not far remote, perhaps in Greece, or Scythia; and another creation in America; another for the Chinese race in the furthest east; while for Africa, distinct types were originated for the natives of Abyssinia, for the interior races on the Niger, and for the besotted human forms which roam the deserts of South Africa. Nor is the exigence of the hypothesis yet at an end. We must assume distinct originals for the natives found in America, for the tribes of the Pacific Isles, and again for those which were found by our navigators on the coast of Australia or of New Zealand.

In conjunction with these startling assumptions, their advocate must maintain the impossibility of migration over the continent of the Old World, of transit to America, across Behring's Straits, or of the gradual passage of Asiatics southward, from island to island, in the Pacific; and the impossibility, further, of any deteriorating effect of climate, or of the conditions of life, in the facility or difficulty of human subsistence, on man's habits and character. Thus, independent creations of mankind in Australia and America, must be affirmed to be *more probable events* than the transit of Asiatics thither, and their subsequent lapse into barbarism and ignorance; and it must be maintained that the influence of tropical suns, or of Arctic snows, and of the opposite conditions of life under each, has had no marked effect on the aspect or form of the human being.

Still, however, let the opponent abide by his hypothesis, of a multiplicity of human creations, and distinct races. He will, then, have to encounter a new class of difficulties, and on him will devolve the somewhat singular task of *accounting*, on his hypothesis, for the *essential resemblances* of all human nations. For widely as some of these nations differ in *some* respects, in respect of what is essential to man's nature they do *not* differ. They have the same form, the same general features, the same perceptions of sense, the same gift of speech, the same spiritual nature, the same mental faculties, the same faculty of understanding, and the power of discerning right from wrong, the same passions, and also the same capacity of social affection, and of religious hope. Navigators never felt,

in first accosting the barbarians of Tahiti or of New Holland, that they were not speaking to *MEN*, or that they were come amongst a new species of being. Nor does the most highly cultivated European now feel, in his intercourse with such barbarians, that his consciousness is incommunicable with theirs, or that some undefinable partition separates his intellectual and moral nature from theirs, like that which divides him from the ourang-outang, or the beasts of the forest. But if there be this intrinsic identity, and common participation of the same intellectual and moral faculties, why should there have been sought a distinct origin for these races? Why cast the inference on the unnecessary, and utterly improbable alternative, of distinct creations?—The remote locality of these barbarians? But the transit from *point to point* was *never remote*, and thousands of years are allowed for its accomplishment. What then is become of the necessity for a multiplied creation? Where is its proof? Where is its probability?

Thus the utter absurdity of the infidel's theory, pursued in its consequences, necessitates its rejection; and its rejection or denial brings us back anew to its *contradictory*, which is that account of man's single descent that is consistent at once with revelation, and with all just reasoning on man's nature and condition. If our remarks on this view of the question have somewhat exceeded in length, some excuse may be admitted from the circumstance that usually there has not been ample justice done to this part of the subject, in the *exposure of the extreme inferences* resulting from denial of the Scripture statement. Our observations on other points in the argument will be much more brief.

One great fact of demonstrable certainty, which bears indirectly on the original unity of our species, is the recency of the human population in all lands, the civilized and the barbarian. If it can be shown that the origin of no people can be dated higher than the age assigned to the patriarch Noah, or rather, that in fact the antiquity of every nation in its separate history and locality, whether on the continent of the Old World, or in the wilds and islands of the New, must be fixed hundreds of years lower; then if it be affirmed that any of these populations have sprung from other parentage than Noah's family, the consequence must be that there have been several distinct creations of the human species, or pairs, within a comparatively *modern* age of the world.

If the nations of Peru and Mexico are not of Asiatic extraction, their numbers, when found by Pizarro or Cortes, would point to no remote age for the beginning of their history; and at *this date*, say even a thousand years before the invasion of their land, which would be the fifth century of the Christian era, the first human pair *they* sprang from must have been in that land created by the Supreme cause which created all things. The same supposition will also attach to the population which is furthest divided from the civilized world, that of the continent of New Holland. Not only must there have been a separate creation of man in that region, but such creation must have been comparatively *recent*, if the brief reasonings which follow, in proof of such recency, are founded on just principles.

One of those principles is the general law of the increase of population, as compared with its existing numbers, at any given period. That it does increase, more or less rapidly, is of course certain. Different circumstances in the life of a people modify this law, such as the supply of subsistence, their industry or the contrary, their habits of life, their wars, their superstitions, their indulgences. But having ascertained and allowed for these modifying causes, whether to advance or check their numbers, the tendency to increase must be considered to prevail, and the general proportion of such increase will then have to be estimated. Taking the general populousness, or the thinly scattered population, of a country into account at any given period, and bearing in mind all modifying influences, the inquirer will now have to reverse the process, and, by retracing a people's history, mark and determine its numbers as they lessen, till he arrives at the first period, or near that age, when they must have been only a single family, or a few families, taking first possession of the soil. Thus we can go back in the history of the population of these Islands, finding at each stage its numbers smaller, and the proportion of forest, and marsh, and uncultivated land of wider extent. There are, it is true, causes which arrest their increase beyond a certain limit, which keep it for a period nearly stationary, or which balance by excess at one time the losses incurred at another. Still, if increase is the prevalent law, *decrease* must be the history of such a population *reversed*, and this decrease, pursued backwards, conducts with certainty to the first ancestors of a nation or tribe.

Let this very simple reasoning be applied to the population, for instance, of New Holland; and we ask, Do their numbers demonstrate a remote origin? Probably not a million, or perhaps half that number of savages, roamed over that continent a century ago, when it was first discovered by the Dutch navigator. Apply to this amount the general law of population, with its modifying circumstances already commented on, and let the philosophical inquirer determine whether these numbers announce a remote antiquity. Have they attained to this increase through a period, say, of 10,000 years, or from before the Mosaic date of the Deluge? Is a million the limit, beyond which fatal conditions of difficult subsistence, or of constant war, hindered their advance through some forty centuries? This can never be shown probable. How came they not far to *exceed* this limit, if even any moderate rate of increase can be affirmed respecting their number? If any constant *decrease* took place, how could they have attained it, or through the long ages from before the Flood, not have become many centuries ago extinct? The fact to be affirmed of their number must be increase, however gradual, and that by a stated law, if computed through large periods. Let this, then, be admitted. Fix on any probable rate of increase, and reckon backwards this amount; and see if the aborigines of New Holland date from an earlier point than the heroes of Greece, or the first dynasties of Egypt. The very supposition of any such remote date in the history of this people is revolting. The inference irresistibly suggested to a calm judgment, in speculating on their condition, and their present numbers, is that their origin, whether their ancestors reached New Holland by canoes, or were created there by the Divine power, cannot be even so remote as the Christian era. Whether the supposition of their creation at that time, or centuries later, be *more probable* than their derivation from the Malays, who gradually passed southward, age after age, along the chain of islands which connects, by no long intervals, the Asiatic Continent with the furthest Continent towards the South Pole, is a problem which we may safely leave to the decision of the hardest unbeliever.

But if this be a fair exposition of the argument, with respect to the example we have selected—that of the people most remote and furthest separated from the Old World—it must be admitted to be decisive of the whole question, respecting the different

original of races, as far as such a theory could be supposed to rest on the *locality* of certain populations, as being widely divided from the rest of mankind, and the imagined impossibility, to mere savages, of transit from island to island. With respect to the peopling of America, that difficulty has long been solved by the discovery of the narrow interval which separates Asia from America at Behring's Straits on the one hand, and of the communication of the Swedish navigators, at the other extreme, with Iceland, and Greenland, and the coast of Labrador. That every remotest isle *could* have been reached by the gradual advance of island navigators is certain; that the Asiatic population on the southern coast *did* thus advance to Ceylon, Borneo, Java, and the neighbouring islands, is also certain; that this natural advance proceeded no further south, but that from Java to the neighbouring isles of Floris and Timor, and thence by not many days' passage to Cape Van Diemen; that this last remainder presented an insurmountable barrier to the Javanese, and the peopling of the south was at this line arrested—are there any that will risk their repute for intelligence to believe? But if not, what becomes of the necessity of a distinct creation for New Holland; and if not for New Holland, what can be alleged for such creation in the other very accessible regions of the globe?

As regards the recency of the vast population which, broken into various nations and kingdoms, and under many names and with so many languages, is spread on the old continent of the civilized world, from our own isles to the coast of China in the furthest east, we can apply the law of population to these nations with nearer approximation to exactness; inasmuch as history carries us upward for a long period, and reveals to us the condition and magnitude of nations in a remote age, as well as their progress since, and thus affords the very means for testing the rate of such progress, and for computing backwards the lessening numbers of mankind. Not that we may even here pretend to more than an approximation to the precise fact; but such a view, by revealing and determining the laws of *tendency*, by showing the general average of increase, is competent to the resolution of the problem, during what probable number of centuries the race of man has existed, and has reached its present enormous population of near a thousand millions of souls. Such rate of progress can be determinately computed for recent times, and in European king-

doms, and the result can be applied, with the necessary limitations, to other nations, and to earlier ages.

There is much difficulty, it is true, in forming any estimate, approaching to exactness, of the population of Asiatic nations, and of the dark races of Central Africa, even in the present day, and with the information, we now possess, of those continents. Still, assuming the number of the whole of mankind, now on the surface of the globe, at about nine hundred millions, which probably exceeds the reality, and applying the law of population, in its inverse order, or in backward series into the past, we cannot imagine a longer period necessary for this increase than that given in Scripture chronology. It is probable enough, that in many countries, population may have been for ages stationary, having soon reached the limit fixed by the productiveness of the soil, or the sea; and no art, science, or commerce existing, by which it could be extended.

In addition to the demonstration, which may almost be thus attained, of the origin of the human race within the chronological limit referred to, we may allege the very *low date of authentic history* amongst the nations of antiquity, and the general ancient traditions of the origin of mankind as springing from a single human pair after the Deluge, and at a date deemed not many ages remote from the times of the first Greek historians. For the monstrous notion of millions of years in a nation's antiquity, we have, it is true, only to consult the comparatively modern inventions of eastern romance in Hindoo and Chinese chronology, which are not only filled with the revolting imaginations of Polytheism, but are crowded with palpable contradictions and inconsistencies, and bear the evident marks of modern fabrication. But in the very *traditions* given in records of historians, known to be the most ancient, there is nothing of this interminable ancientness claimed for the human race; but, on the contrary, even their fabulous ages terminate back on a limit seemingly far lower than that of the patriarchal age of sacred history. This cannot but be admitted as a most remarkable fact, in confirmation of revelation. The furthest limit of the *traditions* handed down to us by the Greek historians or poets is, as to its implied chronology in the past, strikingly consistent with the chronology of Scripture; and instead of pointing to a period more ancient than the latter, lies at a point comparatively low in its scale.

The most remarkable and impressive, perhaps, of all evidence, in proof of the short period during which the human race has existed, is that which is afforded by the brief actual limits of history, and the *comparatively modern date of arts, sciences, and inventions*. The law of humanity is progression; and this progress has been so rapid in the last three centuries, that the condition of the world seems absolutely changed, in about every half century, by the effect of some new discovery or invention. If those who departed from the terrestrial scene at the beginning of this century were to revisit it now, what a transformation in all things would they witness! How much would our progenitors of some four centuries back have been startled, as with the aspect of a new world, if the vision of the present age had been given to them! The art of printing, the new inventions of warfare, the discovery and peopling of the New World, the vast expansion of science, which measures distant worlds, and pierces the secrets of our own planet, the accumulation of arts innumerable in all departments, the strange power of transit on the sea and on land; all these present a spectacle almost like that of miracle, and which would have seemed so, had it been suddenly, and by some unexplained agency, attained. Yet is it the result of the progress of the human mind during the space of some three and a-half centuries; and the progress is so constant and active, that there is to be expected the same transformation and advance in the centuries coming, as in those just named. But this progress, if we are to go back to the ages of Greece and Rome, is comparatively recent. All has taken place under the eye of history. Can it be, then, that the race which can advance thus rapidly, had, say, in Solon's time, existed ten thousand years before? Then what could have delayed, till within the last three thousand years, the footsteps of human invention; and why is it that, if we take our stand on the earlier periods of ancient Greek history, we see the not remote ancestors of Plato or Demosthenes to be almost savages, struggling for subsistence in a condition of utter barbarism, without ships but the canoe, without tillage, without houses or cities, without arts or science?

Thus all early tradition, and the very condition of the nations at the date of authentic history, affirm the recent origin of man; and the general tradition and belief prevalent among nations,

point also to the unity of the race in the commencement of its history.

If we have satisfactorily evinced the origin and antiquity of the human race to be thus, in the most striking manner, consistent with the account given in the sacred oracles; if this recency of origin within the Scriptural period can be with certainty predicated of all the tribes of mankind; then, for the full establishing of the primary fact, of the unity of the human race, we have only the differences of speech, of physical aspect, and of civilization, apparent among mankind, left to be considered, estimated, and accounted for.

And, first, with regard to the endless diversities of human speech, from the polished and intellectual languages of Europe, ancient and modern, to the scant and broken dialects of barbarians, whose vocabulary is confined almost to physical objects and wants; we need only remind the reader, that the researches and speculations of scholars on this question have terminated in the demonstration that human speech was originally one. Of course, the first and most important group of languages, demanding analysis and collation, were the languages of antiquity, of which the literature had descended to after times. The classic languages of Greece and Italy, and the Asiatic ancient dialects, the Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, and Persian, would offer the first problem of comparison. After these, the inquiry would extend to the languages of Northern Europe, and of the Asiatic countries east of the Indus, in which the varieties of the Germanic tongue, and the languages in Hindostan and China, would come under review. The derivation of the chief modern languages of Europe from the Greek, the Latin, and the Teutonic, and of the Asiatic from the Sanscrit and Hindi, being patent, the inquiry would be confined chiefly to the remains of European and Asiatic languages in their more ancient forms. These, then, would have to be investigated, analysed, and collated. Each language would have to be resolved into its primary and fewest elements, and the root-words only to be considered, whence its infinite variety of actual forms and inflections had been compounded and derived. In addition to these elementary roots, the manner of inflection in each language would come under review. We refer only in this general manner to the steps of the investigation in this most interesting



inquiry, that the reader may not imagine that it involved anything of mystery in the process, or of uncertainty in the result. Although, for the conduct of it, a profound and comprehensive scholarship was necessary, combined with sagacity in detecting analogies, and caution against being misled by mere accident or fancy in such resemblances, the results of the investigation when completed admit of very palpable and plain exposition. These results are, that in the elementary words of these ancient languages very many are the same. The numerals, in almost all of them, are the same radical sounds, varied more or less by inflection. This is also the case with respect to many of the words denoting the primary relations of human life, or the more familiar objects of human perception. The words "father" and "mother" in our own Saxon speech are the same radical sounds as those which denote the same relations in the Latin, in the Greek, in the Sanscrit, and some other languages. And the like may be said of the terms for water, bread, tree, river, and similar sounds marking the first and most constant objects of perception or of familiar use. More than this; there is in the *structure* of ancient languages a distinct analogy, sometimes an identity of inflection, which denotes their common derivation from a single original parentage.

We will briefly adduce one or two such analogies, in the inflections of nouns and verbs in the languages of the ancient world. Let it be proposed to attempt to express the relation of one object to some other object, or its action upon it. This we accomplish, in our modern forms of speech, by the employment of an additional distinct set of words. If we wish to express the fact of branches belonging to a tree, we say the branches *of* a tree. And so of other relations: this book we give *to* a friend. Thus we have words preceding nouns, and named prepositions, which mark the relations of one noun to another noun. But the ancient languages mark this relation by a change in the termination of the noun itself. They dispense not with prepositions: they are each enriched with an ample variety of these distinctive terms to mark relation. But they also have a provision, in the inflection of the noun itself, and with it, of its corresponding adjective, for expressing the more familiar and primary varieties of these relations of one object to another. With these inflections most modern languages dispense; and this fact proves that they are not essen-

tial—not indispensable modes of speech for the expression of thought; so that their presence in ancient languages is not to be accounted for by a *psychological* exigence, impelling the mind of man *necessarily* to their invention. Their presence, therefore, in all the more ancient tongues, leads to the same inference as that which we have already pointed out, namely, *their derivation from a primary single model or source.*

It were almost endless to pursue these analogies in language through all parts of their structure. Yet the remaining part, or the structure of the verb, exhibits an identity more varied and special, if possible, than those we have already noticed. The verb, the term denoting existence, or action, or subjectivity to action, is varied by terminations appended to its radical form, so as to denote activity or passivity; to mark the action either as a fact, a command, a wish, or a possibility; to mark either its continuance, completion, or futurity; to indicate the person, either the speaker, the person spoken to, or a third person spoken of. These varieties of the fact, in their minutest and most special character, the ancient languages indicate with a nice and unerring precision, by means of inflections given to the single radical element of the verb; by slight prefixes, or by changes in its appended terminations. To express the same complexity of meanings, most modern languages have adopted what are called by grammarians the auxiliary verbs, together with the use of the personal pronouns.

The brief exposition we have offered of the analogy prevailing in the most ancient of human languages, in their complex, subtle, and systematic structure, will suffice to indicate the character of such resemblance, and the amount of inference it supplies, in confirmation of the Scripture narrative, as to the original unity of human speech, and its abrupt confusion, necessitating the dispersion of human families, in migrations, to people the different quarters of the globe. To find the same artifice of formation prevalent in them all; to discover the analogy, sometimes the identical process of their inflections; to discover, in the speech of peoples most widely dispersed, the same radical sounds in their numerals, and in the designations of some of the primary relations of families; to light upon single words of indubitable identity in remote languages, where all else is distinct and strange, like the huge boulders of the same stratified rocks, which

lie in widely distant districts, marking the action of some ancient catastrophe which swept all else of a former scenery away; to find ourselves, as we push our way upward amidst the obscurity of the first ages of the world, in a manner accosted, sometimes, by the same *sounds*, and always by the same *modes* of speech, in the echoes of a past world;—what does all this tell us, but that such echoes are the attesting utterances, that the family of man was once a single patriarchal people, and its speech, now broken into a myriad dialects, at one period one and the same?

The tracing up of the ancient languages of the civilized world into unity, is thus *a problem mastered*; and the conclusion is one which the profoundest scholars are constrained to admit. With respect to the *modern* languages, prevalent on the same continent of the Old World, throughout Europe and Asia; as all these are only derivatives from the ancient—from the Teutonic, the Latin, the Greek, the Chaldaic, and the Trans-Indus languages, the Sanscrit, Hindi, the Malay, and the Chinese; their history and derivation are involved and determined in the problem of the more ancient ones.

Something of greater difficulty is met with, when the inquiry is extended to the languages of the ancient American tribes, those of the Pacific Isles, and of New Holland, and those of Southern, Western, and Central Africa; and the difficulty arises, in the first place, from a circumstance which itself neutralizes, to a great extent, the very objection to the Scripture account, that infidelity would attempt to found upon it. That circumstance is, the absence of written remains, or even any written formulas of the dialects of these barbarians. How, it may be said, can the brutish gabble of the naked tribes on the Gambia and Senegal, or of the races which people South Africa, or of the aborigines of New Holland and the Pacific Isles, or of the wild Indians, who first greeted Columbus, as he stepped on the shores of a new world—how can the gibberish of these savages be traced upward to an identity of origin with the Hebrew, and the speech of Plato and Pythagoras? We reply that the means of proof, by such process as that which we have attempted to explain, do not, indeed, exist. There are no written memorials of the ancient languages of any of the races named; for even the picture-writing of the Mexicans makes but a faint approach to a language.

Further, till within the last half century, the very sounds of the languages of many of them had not been reduced into their elements, and embodied in the symbols of a written character. This task, the giving written form and significance to the sounds of the living language or languages, spoken in these extremes, and sequestered retreats, of uncivilized life, was reserved to these late ages, to be achieved by the missionaries of the cross. Their dialects, descended from a far ancient source, and corrupted, changed, and yet not even enlarged through the transmission of ages, now, in these last times, have found exponents in the characters given to their elements by the intelligence, and patient industry of the Christians of this western isle. Hence, the materials, in the words, or in the structure of such dialects, for comparison with the ancient groups of the languages of civilization, are necessarily scanty, and in their nature imperfect and indistinct. But what then? If the means of proof of an Asiatic descent to these ruder modes of speech are wanting, so also are the means of *disproof*. It is not as if we came upon a wide and variegated ancient literature in all those regions, wherein all in their languages was utterly remote from the analogy of the literature already known; wherein no single radical sound gave hint of affinity to the rest of the world's speech, and no process of structure or meaning, but stood aloof in utter contrariety to the whole manner of utterance proceeded upon in the languages already known. Nothing of this source of contradiction to the Scripture theory exists, and at least infidelity can build nothing of positive inference against us, either in the far south of the Pacific, or in the history of the Western World.

Still, however, it may become possible, in after years, to trace the element of affinity even into these languages, which lie on the extreme margin of uncivilized humanity. In proportion as the intermediate languages become familiarly known, together with the ruder dialects on which they border, it is reasonable to expect, that the affinities of the former to the older group of languages will be more amply laid open, and then, that resemblances will be detected between this class and the languages which are furthest removed from civilization. Thus the Malay, for example, being the intermediate one, geographically, between the dialects of the Asiatic continent and those of the South Seas, may have its own affinities to the former first ascertained; and then it may

be discovered, that in the dialects still more southern there are proofs of original identity with the Malay. In like manner, the dialects of South and West Africa may come to be traced back, in connecting affinities, to the ancient languages of Egypt or Abyssinia; which languages themselves have their well-known affinities to the Arabic and Syriac.

Thus the primary basis of all languages, as having been originally one, may be considered as fully established; and whatever other difficulties may remain in completing the proof of the unity of mankind, that which seemed so formidable in the diversity of human tongues, is not only extinguished by comprehensive investigation, but a proof is obtained, in the demonstrated affinities of languages, that the families of the earth must have sprung from one centre. In other words, not only is the objection from diversity of tongues neutralized, but where so much diversity was apparent, a basis of resemblance and affinity has disclosed itself, which converts the inference from human languages into a positive argument in support of the Scripture narrative. That narrative affirms an original unity of speech, as of race, and then an abrupt confusion of tongues, and a consequent dispersion of mankind. And *the very state and aspect* of ancient, or existing languages, in their relation to each other, evinces precisely the result to be expected from such abrupt confusion. Those languages exhibit wide and sudden differences in their *masses of radical sound*; but also reveal numerous *remnants of identical sounds*, and still wider and more perfect resemblances in their structure and processes of formation.

Let us now turn to the last and greatest of the difficulties, which might seem to militate against the Scripture history of the unity of mankind, in their first parentage. This, as the reader may anticipate, is that resulting from differences of complexion, and, what is still more striking, of facial structure. The dark, or tawny, or olive colour of the skin, the contour of the face, the retreating forehead, the prominent cheekbone, the thick lips, the protruding jaw; these and other slighter differences of the human face, in some portions of the species, present types of humanity sufficiently marked, in their departure from the ordinary standard of the European or Asiatic nations. And on this subject, perhaps, it were best to content ourselves with giving in reply, the general conclusions arrived at by those scientific inquirers, who

have devoted the most cautious process of investigation, aided by the profoundest physiological attainments, to this question. When we mention the names of Blumenbach, Pritchard, and Cuvier, in connexion with the physiology of man, we have cited the highest authorities known in their especial departments of science. And all these eminent physiologists have concluded with the utmost confidence, or rather established it as a demonstrated fact, that these diversities are no way fundamental, that they betoken nothing inconsistent with the true identity of species in its derivation from one parentage, and that the variations are such as are to be accounted for without difficulty by extreme differences of climate and of modes of life, and these, originally slight, transmitted and aggravated in the descent through many generations.

Such, in a general form of statement, is the determinate conclusion announced by science and philosophy on this important question, and with this statement we might safely terminate our references to it. But as, in the former parts of this discussion, we have ventured on an exposition of the argument in the more simple method suggested to our own thoughts, so, on this question, we shall add a few words of explanation. In this attempt, we profess not to follow very closely the exposition given by others, but simply offer the considerations suggested by the more palpable facts of the case; while for the fortifying of our conclusions, as well as for the fuller exposition of the argument, we refer to the eminent authorities already named.

And first, of the effect of climate on the human complexion; this is so apparent and palpable, that perhaps it hardly offers any difficulty in the case. Changes of complexion very rapidly take place, even on Europeans, on the countries within the tropics; and the same effect, if continued through their descendants, becomes gradually deepened into a hue more and more approaching that of the natives of such countries. And again, on these last, the process is reversed, when they are transplanted to countries in the temperate zones. Thus the European race in a few generations becomes darker, and the Negro race in northern latitudes becomes lighter. We may therefore safely infer that the deeper hue of tropical nations is entirely the result of the solar heat, aggravated in the descent of many generations.

In the next place, as to conformation of the head and face, we

remark that, first of all, conformations resembling the most repulsive features of barbaric races very often occur in European nations in *single instances*, so that this very fact would meet the whole question as to the *possibility* of such conformation being found in the descent of the most perfect races. If such be affirmed to be monstrous deviations, the reply is that they are *not* monstrous in the sense which would be available to an opposite theory. They are *not* deviations which exceed the range of the species, but are *within its limits*. They may denote a less perfect organic structure, but are, of course, fundamentally of the European kind, for *they spring from it*. Next, it is certain that as such imperfectly developed, or modified structure of the head, is attended by less development of intellect, so, conversely, where the intellect has less development, the structure, during a course of generations, would be deteriorated. The features of a population in barbaric ignorance, and want, and contention, assume a cast of their own, and by degrees the structure of the head will show palpable difference. The offspring of the weak and the weak-minded inherit often the vacancy of aspect and retiring forehead of the parents; and there would be a tendency to the aggravation of these defects, if such offspring were committed to the nurture of a savage life. We conclude, then, that there is nothing essentially, in the aspect and form of the rudest aborigines of the Pacific, to disprove their community of nature with the European, or the Caucasian type of humanity.

The remarks we have offered in proof of the unity of mankind, have greatly exceeded in extent the limits we had designed. Our aim has been to show how the diversities of locality, of speech, of aspect, and of civilization, are all capable of explanation, consistently with the fact of a common descent from Noah. Thus the settlement of nations, in the New World, or in the Pacific, or New Holland, can be easily tracked from one contiguous position to another. The diversities of speech, again, are found to be interwoven with affinities, which announce an original unity in some earlier parent tongue. The striking differences of outward aspect in some tribes of mankind, living in the extreme latitudes, either of cold or heat, or in countries separated by the breadth of oceans from the civilized world, admit of much abatement, and of explanation in accordance with the fact of a common origin. Thus the apparent difficulties of the problem are capable of solu-

tion, and they have been resolved by the fair process of scientific investigation. But the argument is far from being ended at this point. To judge rightly of the whole question, it is necessary not simply to reduce and explain diversities, but to take into account the fundamental *resemblances*, those properties which are common to the rudest savage and to the most polished races of the civilized world. Such a savage, however brutish and ignorant, presents himself before us *a Man* in every essential respect; in form, in aspect, in speech, in common feelings and passions, in mental perception, and in the capacity of improvement, intellectual and religious. And of late years, the experiment of Christian missions among the most besotted specimens of humanity ever discovered—beings who seemed, in sluggishness of intellect, to border nearest upon the brute creation—has proved that the immortal spirit in them was but dormant; that they were capable of being reanimated to intelligence, and to the perceptions of moral truth, and of being raised in character and purpose to the noble level of Christian purity and benevolence.

Christianity has thus acted as a *test*, to determine by its results, that "God hath made of one blood all nations to dwell on the face of the earth." The proof of such unity would be complete, independently of this experiment, inasmuch as it rests fundamentally on identities of physical conformation, of intellectual and moral qualities, and of the passions and affections common to the savage and the sage. But the results of Christian missions exalt this proof to a higher ground, and show that in the capacities of religious belief, and hope and practice, in the aspirations after an immortality, and in exercises of devout adoration addressed to the Infinite Spirit, who gave all things being, the aborigines of New Zealand share in the same nature as the Christian pastors who brought to them the knowledge of revealed truth.

Having shown the result of scientific investigation, based even upon the existing aspect of humanity, in its many divisions and diversities throughout the world, to be in perfect harmony with the record of revelation respecting the original parentage of all mankind, and that it affords most striking corroboration of that record; let us now turn to that record itself, and examine its own simple, direct, and positive statement regarding the origin of mankind, and the first steps of human history. Considered as a narrative of that primitive time, when, after the destruction of all



mankind, excepting one family, by the Deluge, all of human history was to recommence from that family, the revealed record possesses an indescribable interest to those who reflect on its absolute and unmixed truth and accuracy. Telling us of a time so many thousand years before our own age, and laying open to us the scene of human life at the very point of its second commencement, the Scripture statement must have been read with an overpowering wonder and delight, had it been communicated for the first time to our own age, being competently attested as having proceeded from a heavenly and infallible source of certainty. Only our familiar acquaintance from very childhood with the Scripture narratives, joined to an inaptitude to reflect on what we know, could have made us so little susceptible, as we too frequently are, of impression from the disclosures of revealed truth even respecting man's early state, to say nothing of its infinitely more momentous discoveries regarding his future destiny, and the provision made for his restoration to the Divine favour and image. But take it as we will, here, in the early narrative of Scripture, we have an account of the condition of man at the second starting-point of his history. On an authority which admits of no demur, we are told that the beginnings of that history were exactly *such as are recited, and no other*. It is not obscure intimations, it is not a confused mixture of fact and fable, that we meet with in the Scripture narrative; but the precise, however summary, statement of fact and of reality, such as our eyes had witnessed had we been present to that age.

The ancient history of Scripture commences the second great period of human progress, after the Deluge, with the unity of mankind in one only surviving family, from which all the nations now spread over the globe have sprung. The testimony of revelation is express on this point. It affirms that all of mankind, except this one family, perished from the earth, in the destruction which their portentous impiety and mutual outrage had provoked; and that Noah's family alone survived after the flood, from which the world was to be re-peopled. Its language allows not the faintest opening for the imagination that there were other survivors in remote localities, which should remain as distinct centres of population. In varied forms of statement it shuts out every supposition of the sort, and fixes our attention on Noah as the one second parent of the human race. And we have seen

how consistent this historic truth is with the evidence of ancient tradition and belief, and how the differences of speech, the wide separation of human settlements, and even the varieties now apparent in different races, are reconcilable to this primary fact.

The words of sacred history at this recommencement of the story of mankind are most emphatic. We have it, first, solemnly affirmed, as the righteous purpose of the Creator, to destroy men from the face of the earth, on account of their incorrigible wickedness, one righteous man and his family excepted. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.... And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth" (Gen. vi. 5—7). "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them" (13). In the account which succeeds, of the destruction wrought by the Deluge, this utter extermination of man, excepting the souls preserved in the ark, is in express words affirmed. "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattle, and every man." "Every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both men and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven, and they were destroyed from the face of the earth. And Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (vii. 21—23). Finally, after the awful catastrophe was past, and the patriarch had offered his first sacrifice on the dry ground, the words of a new blessing are conveyed to Noah, for a replenishing of the earth from his own family. "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and multiply therein" (ix. 1, 7).

Bearing in mind the certainty of this primary fact in human history, and that the Scripture record is its accurate representation, we have now to pursue the next great steps in the early history of mankind, in accordance with the brief summary narrative given us in the book of Genesis. In the tenth chapter we have the enumeration of the chief families of the earlier descendants of Noah; and of these families it is expressly stated, that by them the earth was subsequently peopled. "These," says the sacred historian, "are the families of the sons of Noah, after their

generations, in their nations; and by *these* were the nations divided in the earth after the flood." What a sublime interest must attach, in the esteem of whoever can think justly on such matters, to this brief catalogue of the first ancestors of nations given in the tenth chapter of Genesis! Imagine it a document just rescued from the ruins of Babel, or an inscription distinctly to be deciphered on some one of the sculptured limestone slabs of Nineveh; and with what intense curiosity and wonder would scholars gaze and meditate upon it! But the catalogue, as we have it, is only so much the more valuable, that it has descended to us in a sacred record written, under Divine guidance, at a period long before Nineveh had attained the summit of its greatness, and nearly a thousand years before its capture and fall; a record transmitted from that far-off time, under the protection of a special national security, and compassed with indubitable attestations of its Divine origination and truth. No form in which this picture of the rudiments of the world's peoples *could* have been transmitted to us, can be imagined so satisfactory as that in which it has actually descended to our hands. No condition of security for its safe descent, its incorrupt form, or its perfect attestation, is wanting to the record thus placed before us in the Scriptures.

Before, however, we minutely scan and analyse this heraldry of the nations, we must briefly advert to the marvellous event which broke up the unity of the human family, and enforced its separation and settlement in distinct and independent tribes and peoples. This event is narrated in the chapter which follows the enumeration referred to; the historian having added the list of Noah's descendants in immediate connexion with the mention of that patriarch's death. Having stated that he attained to the age of nine hundred and fifty years, and that he died, he adds, "Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah," and proceeds with the enumeration in Gen. x. In the following chapter, he gives an account of the interposition which divided mankind in speech and council, and led to their dispersion. This was a confusion of tongues, on occasion of the singular, and probably impious attempt to rear a tower on the plains of Shinar. We need not here discuss the proofs of such attempt independently of the plain statement of Scripture; but taking such statement for our infallible authority and guide, and remarking that it is

strikingly supported by ancient tradition, and corroborated, as some travellers think, by monuments still existing of the enterprise itself, in the plains near Babylon; we add, that a confusion of tongues from a speech originally one and universal, alone corresponds to the fact as disclosed in mutual relations of languages, subsisting under conditions of wide separation and diversity. Had the languages of antiquity (for the question is essentially determined by reference to *these*) never been sundered from one common stock, the existence among them of many identical words, and the analogies pervading their structure, would have been utterly unaccountable.

Let us add, that not only was such confusion the meet rebuke inflicted on an attempt conceived in presumption against Heaven, and a vain confidence of providing against any such subsequent catastrophe as the Deluge, but that it would have seemed the most effective and immediate interposition for causing the migration and spread of mankind in the earth, and so fulfilling the ulterior destiny of Providence. Migration takes place, either from the poverty or distress of an overcrowded population, or from some incentive of higher happiness promised in a far land. The former stage had not been reached, nor even anticipated, in the rich centre of Asia, in the early ages after the Deluge; and the utter ignorance of all the rest of the globe, or rather the certainty of toil in all its regions, offered no such inducement as the latter. In our own time and country we have migrations prompted by both causes—by pressing want, and again by the prospect of more rapid wealth, acting on such as are above poverty, or even toil. But the first migrations were enforced by neither.

Nothing probably but the impossibility of keeping together as one, could have parted the first union of human families, while their minds were yet overcast with awe from the recent destruction of their predecessors, and with ignorance and fear as to the character of unknown regions. Some change must be wrought, so sudden and perplexing, as to make community hopeless and impossible; such as to turn all attempts at communication, except with single families, into a sort of mockery and provocation; and such change the confusion of Babel wrought in a single day. While a busied and hopeful population were tumultuously plying their tasks in the slime-pits, or on the walls, and tens of thou-

sands wrought with the will and ardour of one—in a moment, without warning or apparent cause, families and groups find their utterance estranged and perverted, and hear in the same instant sounds, wild and in their strangeness horrible, from the tumult around them. Only a few small groups have interchange of thought; with all the multitude besides, each group or family felt itself in a conflict of utterance and strange gesture; and the sad but inevitable condition of breach, and severance, and departure for other homes, is at once apparent, and forthwith obeyed. We have mentioned that the confusion of speech broke the mass into families and groups; and have not represented its effect as resolving the whole into individuality, and making as many tongues as there were persons, or as there were pairs. This exception seems evidently implied in the fact, that the migration consequent on this confusion took place in *families*, and that the confusion did not intermingle the descendants of one of the children of Noah with those of another. For example, the children of Japheth went not into migration with those of Shem, or the latter with those of Ham.

As will be seen by reference to the preceding chapter (Gen. x ), the confusion of utterance split the multitudes into masses, corresponding to their social divisions in the families of the three sons of Noah, and perhaps the descendants into other divisions; still, however, guarding the social relations which united groups of families in clans, more nearly akin to one another than to other clans. Thus both the wisdom and beneficence of Providence are distinguishable, in an act of judgment called for by the presumption of mankind. In the very confusion of Babel, is there discernible nothing like chance, or caprice, or disorder, when viewed from the higher point of the Divine administration. An evident purpose, and a discriminating principle, pervade, limit, and control the awful and confounding perplexity which lighted instantaneously on the intellectual apprehension, and on the utterance, of the thousands confederated on the plains of Shinar. There was mercy, which guarded this confusion from breaking over the circling limits of near kindred. The wife became not dissevered in speech from her husband, nor were children converted into aliens in language from their parents. And the consonance, either of the retained elements of their former language, or of the freshly-invented forms of a new one, extended,

as we have said, to the wider circles of patriarchal clans, and sacredly guarded these circles. This must be the just view to take of the confusion of tongues at Babel. Any other supposition would have given, as the result of it, as many distinct languages as there were human beings then congregated together. And if this be the just account of the fact, it is a highly interesting one, and illustrates in a new light both the goodness and wisdom which tempered its severity, and drew forth the elements of future combination and order in unions of families, from a calamity which must have seemed, at the first moment, to threaten the universal resolution of society into the single elements of individual agents, isolated, mutually unintelligible, and for ever estranged. This extreme was guarded against. Speech, intelligible, however strange and new, still held together families that were more nearly akin; and thus, while cutting them off from other groups, united them more closely among themselves, and prompted and fortified their purpose to seek out for themselves, away from the rest of mankind, a new country and a common home. Such was the discriminating principle, and such the beneficent result of the confusion of human speech. Under such a grouping of social relations, was the very dispersion of mankind ordained to take effect.

Having contemplated this singular event in the early history of man, of the breaking up of human society at its original centre, and by means so unforeseen, so wonderful while simple, and yet so effectual, *its very results enduring to the present time*, and holding nations distinct in languages and literature, as in communities; we cannot examine without deep interest the Mosaic account, in the chapters already referred to, of the actual combinations and migrations of the descendants of Noah, which took place at the dispersion from the plains which were watered by the Euphrates and Tigris. The inspired historian gives us these only in a general summary and outline; after which, he proceeds to deduce the genealogy which connected the line of Abram with Shem, and so to furnish the links of the descent of that promised Seed of Abram, in whom all the families of the world were to be blessed. And here again, as in respect of the record given of the times before the Flood, we must mark the historian's reserve, as the distinct and peculiar evidence, not only of his truth, but of the higher restraint and guidance which con-

trolled his pen. Had his narrative been fable, he could doubtless have invented a much more ample and magnificent scheme of the early world's genealogies, and of heroes and nations; or, while under the restraint of truth confining him to fact, his memory, or knowledge of credible tradition, could have furnished him with numberless names, movements, enterprises, and incidents, which might have their fair amount of interest and even of instruction. He might have told us—for Moses, learned in all the wisdom and learning of Egypt, surely must have heard such matters—of the rise of civilization and a kingdom on the banks of the Nile, and of the grandeur of its monuments, or of that fast extending monarchy on the Tigris, which bore the name of Ninus. Had his purpose been simply self-prompted, had his wish been, like that of other historians, to write a book for the instruction of after ages, and as a monument of his name and learning, he would scarcely have neglected those collateral sources of interest, even while patriotically pursuing the theme of his own nation's annals. But as stern truth guarded him from inventing the fabulous, so the reserve imposed on his purpose, and perhaps his very thoughts at the moment, kept him from introducing much even of what he knew, and held his narrative faithful to the grand aim of unfolding the process of Divine interpositions, in their course and progress, in the history of patriarchs and of the nations sprung from them, for the ultimate development of the Christian dispensation. And what reader, who believes in the fact and reality of such a Divine purpose thus unfolding in history, but will admit, that *this* theme was the infinitely grander one, and one in prosecution of which, the historian might well be led, or by a higher power directed, to treat with a sovereign disregard the origin of kingdoms founded by apostates from the rule of the One True God, and identified with the prevalence at once of idolatry, tyranny, sensuality, and the universal debasement of the human mind. What was there in the power of the Egyptian monarchy, or the learning, such as it was, of its priesthood; what in its temples and pyramids; or what was there in the enlarging despotism of Nineveh, which would entitle these to more than passing allusion, in the narrative on which the historian was occupied? Yet we can easily conceive, that however deeply impressed with the solemnity of his greater theme, his mind, if left uncontrolled to its own associations, would naturally

have glanced to these the most prominent events of his own time ; and therefore we cannot but feel, that his reserve and forbearance mark the secret influence of that Divine Agent, by whom this first, as well as the whole succession of the sacred writers, was infallibly guided.

Adverting, then, to the reserve, under Divine control, which set such a severe limit to this portion of the sacred narrative, and which alone accounts for, and gives a satisfactory reason for its brevity ; let us now see what is the information, what are the indications and hints, it furnishes regarding the early division and migrations of mankind. And brief as it is, being much of it a catalogue of names, it is an invaluable document, such as nothing else of antiquity can supply the place of, and capable, by patient study, and comparison with later Scripture, of giving very distinct notices of the movements of the chief divisions of mankind. One interesting fact in this document, and which furnishes the key to its fuller exposition, is, that its names, being first those of persons, and afterwards of countries, open to us a much wider extent of information regarding the early world, than its barren genealogy might seem at first to announce. Thus among descendants of Noah, and in the early links of the chain, we have names which the later history of Scripture makes familiar to us in its casual references to countries, and sometimes in the announcements of their prophetic doom. We have Madai and Javan, Tarshish and Kittim, colonizers of the western isles and continents ; Cush, Mizraim, and Canaan, whose families peopled Palestine, Egypt, and interior Africa ; we have Seba, Havilah, Sheba, and Dedan, names connected in later allusion with Arabia Felix, the land of gold and frankincense ; and in connexion with the descendants of Shem, we have, besides the line of the Abrahamic descent, the names of Elam, Asshur, and Aram—of Ophir and Havilah, and Jobab ; most of which meet us again, identified with countries bordering on the Euphrates. Thus, it will be seen, this catalogue is not a meaningless list of early names, but one which teems with information touching on almost every part of the ancient world. Let us then request attention to the specific information it gives, in the three divisions of Noah's family. This information is, in these divisions, perfectly clear and express, pointing out the quarters of the globe whither they respectively migrated, and



where they became centres of races, and the germs of mighty states.

The descendants of Japheth are first mentioned in this outline; and by these we are told, "The isles of the Gentiles were divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations." By the isles of the Gentiles, we are undoubtedly to understand the isles of the *Ægean* Sea, or perhaps, in general, the islands and northern promontories of the Mediterranean. This expression would therefore indicate in a general manner the westerly direction towards the Mediterranean which the Japhethite families took, and the first positions they occupied in the nearer isles in the *Ægean*, which tempted their enterprise by the promise at once of a fertile soil, and of undisturbed security. As the coast line of the Mediterranean, southward from Asia Minor, was occupied by the race of Canaan, to the Japhethites Asia Minor itself lay open; and probably not till after the lands, watered by streams well known in after history, the *Halys*, the *Meander*, the *Hermus*, had been occupied, as well as the chief positions on the coast, did the increasing population advance westward, by sea, some in longer voyages, to the possession of the isles, and others across the *Hellespont* into Thrace, and thence on to the vale of Thessaly and the mountain lands of southern Greece. Thus the whole of Asia Minor, the *Ægean* Isles, and the contiguous lands of Thrace and Thessaly, were the first possessions of Japheth's descendants; whence they gradually extended westward to Italy, Spain, Gaul, and the British Isles, and ultimately peopled the whole of Europe, as well as northern Asia.

The statement, with which the historian accompanies the account of this European migration, is worthy of remark, and confirms the view already given of the limiting circles of the Confusion of Babel. The descendants of Japheth took possession of the isles of the Gentiles, "every one," it is stated, "*after his tongue, after their families, in their nations,*" denoting, as it would appear, something of a distinct form of speech amongst the offspring of each of the sons of Japheth previously named, together with probably a general affinity amongst them all. The confusion could not have intercepted the medium of intelligence between every man and every man, else the minor combinations of families could not have been formed. Another remark to be offered respecting the

Japhethites is, that in passing to the less fertile settlements of Europe, where all, except on the coast, was forest or marsh, and where they were cut off from communication with the central population of Asia, they very soon were transformed into a hardier and fiercer race, subsisting by plunder and piracy; and though destined to attain a higher civilization and intellectual development in the end, they sank, in the first centuries after their separation from the parent stock, into a ferocious barbarism, unknown to the kindred nations around the Euphrates.

The more general designation borne by these descendants of Japheth, as transmitted to us by historians of their own race in after ages, is that of Pelasgi; which name comprehended the races subsequently distinguished, into Hellenes in Greece, Oscans in Italy, and Teutones in Germany, and Gaul. And the researches of later times have ascertained the common basis of all the ancient languages of these divisions of the European colonization. Not only is the Latin akin to the Greek, rather than derived from it, but also the Teutonic tongues of Northern Europe have an affinity with both, and have traces even of a nearer relation to the parent Pelasgic tongue. And again, all these languages of Europe have an affinity much nearer with those of nations beyond the Indus, with the Hindi and Sanscrit, than with the dialects of the races of Shem in Central Asia. So that the Indo-Teutonic denotes the first and chief group of the divisions of human speech. Whether the explanation of this fact be, that the countries south of the Hymalayahs, received many colonists from the north, and so from the Japhethites, or that the nearer descendants of Shem bore thither, across the Indus, an earlier and more primitive form of the parent stock, than the Chaldee of his other descendants, it is useless to speculate. Returning to the Pelasgic race, we may add, that for centuries after the Dispersion, no powerful combination of tribes under one dominion arose amongst them. Ages were to pass before the germs became discernible of monarchies in the Peloponnesus, or on the banks of the Tiber. Assuming the era of the Dispersion at about the date of 2,200 years B.C., it is not till about 1,000 years B.C., or perhaps much later, that we have traces of the smaller Japhethite monarchies of Sicyon, Argos, and Sparta, in the Peloponnesus, and of Etruria in Italy, which preceded the empire founded by Romulus about 750 B.C. And this fact, of the

later development of civilization, and of political association and rule, in these parts of Europe, is again, exactly in accordance with the fact of the dispersion of mankind having been from an Asiatic centre. Had Europe been peopled from a distinct centre, contemporaneous with that of Asia, *its history would have been ages more ancient than it is*. It would in those ages have had, what centuries later it attained, mighty monarchies, populous cities and armies, and arts and sciences. But Italy, and even Greece, were forests, flooded with marsh and lake, when Nineveh had attained its highest glory, when the temples and pyramids of the Nile had long been reared, when Tyre and Sidon were at the summit of their prosperity, and when the latter had founded Carthage on the African shore, in the distance over against Italy.

Thus every circumstance we meet with in history, every fact, every tradition, conspires in unison with the Scripture record, as to the original population of the world, both in its centre of derivation, and in its order of extension and development. It was perfectly natural and certain, assuming the Scripture account of the fact to be accurate, that civilization, arts, learning, monarchies, would be developed first in Asia, and on the African boundary of the Nile; and then, in ages long subsequent, in Europe; in Greece, in Italy, in Sicily, and in Gaul. And this remote higher antiquity of eastern history, civilization and learning, was constantly recognised by the most highly-cultured Pelasgic races. The rulers and philosophers of Greece travelled to the east, for historic knowledge and ancient wisdom. Lycurgus, Solon, Pythagoras, and Plato, sought information and learning, not so much even in the Greek cities of Asia Minor, in the towns which gave birth to Thales, Bion, Anaximenes, and Homer, but in Syria, in the cities of Phoenice, in Babylon, and in the old cities on the Nile, in Heliopolis, Thebes, and Memphis.

Hence it is some thousand and more years, after the event which broke up the unity of speech, and dispersed the nations through the earth, that we shall have again occasion to glance to the descendants of Japheth. The monarchies destined to arise amongst these, will hereafter spread their shadow over Asia, and the language and literature of the nearer race of them will become a dominant element in the intellectual culture of the world, and fulfil a conspicuous part in preparing the spread and attestations of a Divine revelation. But for the present, we quit

Europe; and while the Japhethites are surrendered to the long struggle with a more difficult soil, and with the barbarism ensuing on a life of penury and plunder, we turn to mark the destination of Shem's descendants in Central Asia, and of those of Ham on the Syrian and on the north African coast.

To the race of Ham is assigned, in the Scripture narrative, the whole vast plain of Western Asia, from the Euphrates westward to the Mediterranean. They were the descendants of this second son of Noah, who seem to have retained the position, where, at first, all the families, sprung from the patriarch, remained congregated, previous to the confusion of Babel. Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, named, whether for his ambition in subjugating families to his sway, or simply for his courage in destroying the fierce animals of the chase, the mighty hunter before the Lord, founded the first monarchy known in human history, having made Babel or Babylon, and other cities which he built—Erech, and Accad and Calneh in the land of Shinar—the beginning, as it is expressed, of his kingdom. “Out of that land,” it is added, “went forth Asshur,” or according to another reading, he, that is, Nimrod, went out into Assyria, “and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah; the same which is a great city.” In the plain watered by the Jordan, and on the coast, other descendants of Ham, the families of Canaan, built cities, and founded the first and most celebrated marts of ancient commerce. Sidon, who gave his name to one of these, was the eldest born of Canaan, and the great-grandson of Noah. He also probably founded the neighbouring city of Tyre, which attained a still higher and more enduring celebrity, for its commerce and riches. They were the Sidonians who founded Carthage, which became for ages mistress of the seas, and the centre of a wide dominion over Northern Africa, and Sicily and Spain.

Further, the sons of Ham, Cush and Mizraim, took early possession of the Delta and valley of the Nile, and founded there a monarchy, ancient as that of Nineveh and Babylon, and destined to survive to far later ages, if not under the Pharaohs of the Cushite race, yet under a succession of other dynasties; and still maintaining its place as a kingdom among the nations. Thus it is in the history of Ham's descendants, that we meet with the first great monarchies of the ancient world. Babylon, Nineveh,

Egypt; Tyre, Sidon, Carthage; all these kingdoms, which antedated, by many centuries, the rise of monarchies in any other race, are identified with the enterprise and valour, and no less the despotic ambition, of that branch of Noah's family, whose descendants, spreading to South and West Africa, were doomed, in later ages, to debasement, oppression, and slavery. First in the race of ambition and empire, their monarchies and the chief of their mighty cities, Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Thebes, Carthage, survived not to the Christian era; but fell in succession under the attack of conquerors, some of them of the race of Shem, but the last and mightiest, of the European descendants of Japheth. Moreover, the population of the Hamite race is that, which from Egypt to the banks of the Niger, the Gambia, and the Senegal, assumed a hue and aspect the most widely different from those of the common ancestry of man, and became the victims of wrongs, sufferings, and degradation, surpassing those of any portion of the human race. Still, in the humiliated state of these children of the torrid climes of Africa, there is discernible the promise of melioration, and of a restored freedom and dignity, in virtue of the spread of Christian truth, which the Negroes in their native homes, or as slaves in the western isles of the New World, have ever more eagerly welcomed than almost any other portion of the human family. But as our concern, in this outline, is with the ancestors of this race, with the early movements and enterprise of their fathers in their first Asiatic centre, we point to the ruins of Nineveh, of Babylon, of Tyre, and to the structures still remaining in Egypt, its pyramids and temples, as the monuments of the power, dominion, and art of the Hamite race, that which reared the most ancient of monarchies after the Deluge.

In the account given of the families of Shem, there are fewer names capable of being identified with localities. The writer's chief aim appears to have been, to give prominence to the fact, that in this line lay the descent of Abraham, or rather of the Hebrew race, in the track of whose history the sacred narrative is afterwards to proceed, with more or less regularity, through many centuries, till the coming of the Messiah. Accordingly, the high designation given to Shem is, that he was the father of all the children of Eber, who was himself the great-grandson of the patriarch thus distinguished, and the great-great-grandfather of Nahor, the father of Abram. In the same passage also, Shem is

named as "the brother of Japheth the elder" (Gen. x. 21); whence it should seem, that although in the first recital of the names of Noah's sons, he is named first, and then his brothers Ham and Japheth, he was in reality the youngest of Noah's family, and probably Ham the second, which place his name occupies in every arrangement. And if this be the fact, then the proper order of the names is just the reverse of that first given; and the arrangement according to their birth must be Japheth, Ham, and Shem, which is the order observed in recording their descendants and families. As the ancestor, however, of the father of the Faithful, and of the promised Deliverer, the chief distinction is reserved for this youngest born of the Diluvian family; and hence a full and complete genealogy is given—not of all his descendants, but of that one line which connects Eber with the patriarch, who, at the Divine summons, removed from his Syrian home, to become a sojourner in the valleys of Palestine.

We have stated that among the many other names, besides that of Eber, given us in this branch of Noah's family, we have fewer which can be definitely connected with the localities of their future settlements, than in the divisions of Japheth and Ham. It should seem certain, however, that while the sons of Ham held possession of the territory around Babylon, where all the families of Noah had congregated before the Dispersion, and there founded cities and mighty kingdoms on the Euphrates and the Tigris; and while the families of Japheth departed westward in a body to Asia Minor, and across the Hellespont; the families of Shem retained possession of the fertile plain lying between the Tigris and the Euphrates; and further, that they formed settlements east of the Tigris, the most considerable of which rose into a monarchy, under the rule of Elam, the eldest-born of Shem, and bearing his name. This kingdom of Elam was probably much inferior, at first, to the monarchy of Nimrod, which extended along the Tigris, from Babylon to Nineveh; but it is the very monarchy, which, at a later period, under the name of Persia, was destined to crush and overwhelm the monarchies of Nineveh and Babylon, and to become the second of those wide dominions, which spread their arms and power, successively, over the greater part of the civilized world. Thus, on the west of the Babylonian or Assyrian monarchies of Ham, and still more on the east, the families of Shem were multiplying and spreading;

and while the former were destined to early decay and ruin, the latter gradually rose into an empire, which reached from the Indus to the Hellespont and the Nile. At this point of their history, however, we are concerned only with the indications given of the localities occupied by the Shemite race. These were, as we have mentioned, first, the plains west of the Tigris towards Syria, in the more hilly extreme of which, on the Mediterranean, the Canaanites had already become settled; and second, the countries east of the Zagrian mountain range, where the Shemite race multiplied, so that not only an *Elamite* monarchy was founded, but doubtless many of its earlier families moved eastward beyond the Indus, gradually peopled Hindostan and China, and spread thence southward, to the isles of the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific. Thus, in the distribution of races ultimately attained, Asia south of the Taurus, the Caspian, and the Hymalayahs, became the possession of the Shemite race, with the exception of Phœnice and of Palestine, from which last, however, the Canaanites were in time expelled; the whole of Africa, together with the coast of Syria, and fore-mentioned territories on the Tigris, was possessed by the race of Ham; while again, Europe, and all Asia, north of the mountain range, which commencing in the Taurus extends to Kamschatka, became the home of the nations descended from Japheth.

Such was the allotment of the lands of the earth to the families of Noah's sons. These settlements were chosen by each division of these families respectively, either by a tacit arrangement, or one enforced by the mastery of the more powerful against the weak. The race of Ham evidently took the lead in the selection; arrogating to itself those territories which offered the richest, and most immediate reward to human toil. Retaining the possessions already cultivated in the Babylonian plains, it took for itself also the richest districts on the Jordan, and the coast of Syria, and above all, it eagerly grasped the occupation of the Nile. The race of Shem held what it could of the plains of Mesopotamia, but sought its freer development in the lands east of the Tigris, where it had no competitor. To Japheth's race was left the necessity of a more distant migration from the parent centre of mankind. It had to colonize the rougher, and more mountainous districts of Asia Minor; to people Phrygia, and the countries lying on the *Ægean*; thence to advance to the numerous isles ad-

joining; and, beyond the Hellespont, to traverse the snow-covered plains of Thrace, to Illyricum and to Greece; to Italy, and Spain, and Gaul; to Germany, and Scythia. Committed to a harder destiny through all its earlier history, and in all its history to a constant encounter with difficulty, the character of the race of Japheth assumed from the commencement a more enterprising and resolute form. Its temperament became rough, hardy, and daring; fitted, in the end, to win back the ascendant over all the rest of the human family. Its home was in the forest, on the mountain summits, and on wide-spread waters of the deep. Privation and difficulty taught or enforced inventions, compelled the intellect to aid the hand, exacted the resources of the inventive mind to extort what nature seemed reluctant to afford, and hence, after the first conquests of labour, brought in the train of arts and of sciences. The other races replenished, at the cost of but little toil, with the richest products of the earth, attained less of hardness and determination. Their character became effeminate and indolent; while in the deeper latitudes of the torrid zone, their hue and aspect rapidly deteriorated from the beauty and the dignity of the human form.

While, however, the destination of the families of the Dispersion seemed thus, and actually was, the result of independent choice in the strong, and necessity in the rest, it took not effect, except under the overruling direction of the Supreme Disposer, who first made of one blood all the nations which were to people the earth, and who also determined, with the most absolute and minute destination, "the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Nor was this destination, in respect of the three chief divisions of the human race, wholly a secret; though, when declared, at first but little understood. The patriarch himself, whose descendants were to repeople the earth, indicated in language *now* perfectly intelligible, while its import is still fulfilling, the general character of each son's portion in the history of man, and the relation of their descendants to each other. The blessed promise blended in the succession of Shem's family, the long debasement entailed on a portion of that of Ham, and the enlarging dominion of Japheth's race, till it should occupy much of the richest inheritance of Shem;—these general, but striking destinies of the future, in each division, are clearly announced in the prediction uttered by their common ancestor; and they are those, which



have been verified in history through every period since; and more singular than all, are being verified, on the largest scale, even in this latter period of time. To say nothing of the condition of the race of Ham in Africa, and with only a reference to the conquests of the Japhethites, first under the Macedonian, and then under the Roman power; how astonishing, as compared with this prediction of the acquisitions of Japheth in the ancient possessions of Shem, is first the peopling of the New World from Europe, and next more especially, the occupation of Hindostan by British arms and enterprise, and the sovereignty held by this remotest Isle of the Gentiles, over some 250 millions of the Shemitic race! None who will calmly reflect on the whole case, and who will note the age and character of the prediction, mark its singular and distinct indications to the children of Noah, and the fulfilment of these in a manner so improbable, and for ages inconceivable, will refuse to recognise in them the omniscience and sovereign rule of Him, who disposes all events according to the counsel of his own will.

## CHAPTER III.

## FIRST GERMS OF KINGDOMS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD.

Origin and necessity of political government as protection against individual wrong—Illustration in the commencement, according to Herodotus, of the Median kingdom—The first small monarchies formed in Central Asia—Nineveh and Babylon; certain ancient origin of these (Gen. x.)—Whether Asshur, of Shem's race, founded Nineveh—Nimrod founder of Babylon—Spectacle of human enterprise in the age next after the Deluge—Noah and Shem survivors in this period—Human labour directed to colossal architecture—The aspect of high civilization given in this first age, and this attested by its monuments—Presumptive evidence of much knowledge and art inherited from the time before the Deluge—Small states formed on the Jordan and the Nile—All these first settlements probably in Noah's life time—Notice of his character and influence, and his singular relation to the multiplied races of his family.

AFTER having reviewed the early history of mankind, in their original second unity, in their confusion of speech, in their enforced and various dispersion, and in the chief distributions of the human race over the globe, in which the dispersion took effect; the next stage presented to us, in the history of the ancient world, is that in which we behold the first of those political combinations, which succeed to the patriarchal rule of a previous period, and which band mankind in masses, for subjection, for enterprise, for dominion, for progress in arts and science, and for general advance in civilization. It is not necessary to prove, at any great length, that such wider combinations were indispensable, as a stage in human progress to a higher condition of temporal well-being, and of moral and intellectual culture; or, consequently, that, in their overruled and ultimate result, they are to be considered as part of the beneficent design of Divine Providence. At least in the fallen condition of man, such combinations, even if at first the effect of oppression, rather than of voluntary concert, became essential, in order to form the first rude barrier against individual wrong from the many; and government of the worst sort was found to be infinitely more

tolerable, than the reciprocal collision and conflict of man with man, which is its alternative. For none will imagine that men would have lived, even as families, in habitual amity, in mutual forbearance, in a scrupulous respect for the rights of the weak, and in the exchange of good offices amongst all. On the contrary, cupidity, violence, conflict, and general anarchy speedily ensue, if there be no superior, dominant force to keep them in check. Thus government, begun most frequently in the violence of the strong, and the usurpation of one, became the resource and refuge to the many, from greater, from nearer, and from more constant, and fiercer oppression and conflict. The very worst forms of despotism shield the larger mass of individuals from a bitterer existence of wrong and outrage. There could in fact be no advance from the mere savage state, no security for the accumulation of wealth, not a moment's safety for personal freedom or even life, except under the shelter which every government in some degree constitutes. This circumstance does not vindicate the original usurpation of any conquest, or the severe rule of any government. It only shows, that a government of any sort is a preferable alternative to anarchy; and, though founded at first in force, is a step onwards to that stage of civilization, in which force becomes tempered by law.

Hence then we are warranted to conclude, that the combinations of mankind in masses, in nations, or tribes, under a general single rule, which represses individual conflict and violence, and levels the many in a common allegiance to one sovereignty, must be a part of the design of Providence; since the result of the whole is ultimately beneficent, and since the rudest first government is an indispensable stage, in the progress of society, to security, wealth, and intellectual development. Most interesting is it, therefore, to contemplate, in this light, the first aggregation of mankind into masses and polities; and, while there is discerned, mostly, only the action of selfishness and the lust of power, to see how, under the direction of a higher rule, this very principle of injustice, so powerful in man's nature, is made subservient, in an incalculable measure, to the suspension of its own tendencies, and to become the antidote to its own primary evils. Ambition, coveting another's possessions, envy, contention, lead to open strife, to conflict, to conquest, to the subjection of many to the usurpation of one; but the power of this one becomes the means

of exempting the many from deadly and perpetual strife; and there is certainty, that the power of no tyrant will be permitted to inflict on all, such oppressions as they would have suffered from one another.

As a practical illustration, in early history, of the indispensable-ness of politics in the civilization of mankind, we may adduce the very graphic account, given by Herodotus, of the commencement of the Median kingdom by Deioces, the great ancestor, on the mother's side, of Cyrus. During a period of misrule, when none acknowledged any chief or patriarch, Deioces devoted himself to the healing of differences and arbitrating of disputes in his own village; and on these occasions acquitted himself with so much impartiality and fairness, that his name became widely known, and more distant tribes resorted to him for judgment in their quarrels. When his fame had now become established, and the population had tasted the sweets of tranquillity and justice, Deioces, on a sudden, discontinued his primitive Divan in his village, professing that he could give no further attention to the concerns of others, but must devote his whole time to his own. The result was, says Herodotus, that the population around broke out into worse violence than before, and at last besought again the interference of their former village judge. He made it a condition of his services, that they should acknowledge his sovereignty as a king, and build him a palace and a city, where he might hold his court, and establish his authority. This demand was assented to; and the palace and city of Ecbatana, whose remains (in the modern Hamadan) subsist to this day, were speedily reared by the combined labour of the Median tribes. Such is the account given by the Greek historian of the origin of the Median monarchy; and whether in any degree fictitious or not, it is at least plausible, and illustrates the necessity of political allegiance and rule.

These remarks may lead our thoughts to view, with something of distinct interest, the first formations of politics which took place in the ancient world. These, as was to be expected, took place in that part of Asia where the chief mass of mankind had been congregated, previous to the confusion of speech. After that event, while many tribes and families migrated westward towards the Mediterranean coast, and some to the east, towards the Indus, a large portion of the descendants of Ham remained in the plains of Shinar, and among them, his grandson Nimrod gained the

ascendant and leadership, and became the first of the kings of men. Thus the first monarchies of the ancient world, the first of those wider combinations of families under one chief or despot, which succeeded to the patriarchal clans, were doubtless those formed near the plains of Shinar, and on the Tigris. Afterwards, at a period not much later, were commenced the smaller kingdoms in Palestine, in the valley of the Jordan, and on the coast; and the kingdoms, for at first there were several distinct ones, formed in the valley of the Nile, both in Upper and in Lower Egypt. In forming our conception of the character and extent of these first combinations, as also of their local centres and growth, we are strictly limited to the brief notices given of these remote times in the Scriptures; and it is not till after the lapse of many ages, that their early history, which may be tracked along the succession of brief and distant hints and allusions of the Scripture narrative, connects itself with the distinct account given of their more flourishing period, as of their fall, in the pages of Herodotus. Thus of Babylon, Nineveh, Elam, Tyre, and Egypt, the Scripture account commences, perhaps, a thousand years earlier than the period at which Herodotus fixes their existence as powerful kingdoms, while aware of their remoter traditionary history. This fact must be borne in mind, in every attempt to connect the sacred narrative with that of other history. This long interval of gradual progress and growth, about which all other history is silent, separates the first names of kings as given in Scripture, from the first of much later dynasties, as alluded to in Herodotus. This important distinction being kept in view, the course becomes more clear and simple, for framing a consistent account of the first ages of the political story of mankind.

Attempts have been made by different chronologists to fill up the interval alluded to, from the commencing notices of Scripture to the historic period of the Greek historian, with a succession of names and dynasties, till they connect with the undisputed names of a clearly historic period, a thousand years later. The history of Nineveh or Babylon, for example, is thus traced, as to the succession of monarchs, by Dr. Hales, from Nimrod, named by him Belus the First, to Pul who is mentioned in later Scripture, and whom Hales considers to be Belus the Second, a monarch who reigned some 1,800 years later than his ancestor, the first despot over man. But such attempt, however interest-

ing and laudable in its aim, being founded for the most part on conjecture, is far from satisfactory; and it has the effect rather of perplexing the view of those ages with a confused mass of names, than of assisting the judgment, or of adding to our knowledge. We deem it more safe and useful to take account, first of the remoter beginnings of the chief kingdoms of the ancient world as they are represented in Scripture; and afterwards, allowing for the long interval of their growth, during which all history is silent, if we except one or two allusions in the sacred narrative, to connect the later notices of the Scriptures with the earliest accounts given by other historians. Such connected account, though in brief summary, we now proceed to attempt.

In the plain of Shinar, and near that vast unfinished structure, where the confusion of speech suddenly broke up the confederation of mankind, was formed the first union of tribes under a single chief, denominated a monarchy; and Nimrod, the grandson of Noah, became the first of the monarchs named in the history of the human race. Whether he was the Belus referred to in the ancient traditions of Assyria, or whether that name properly belonged to Pul who is mentioned in later history, or whether, finally, as Hales conjectures, both Nimrod and Pul bore the name of Belus, are points that must be left undetermined. All traditions in Asia pointed back to a monarch named Belus as the founder of its first great empire on the Tigris; but this would leave the question undetermined, whether by such founder was intended the more ancient monarch, who first united tribes under his sway, or a later monarch whose enterprise and valour had first given a wider development and a more stable form to the Assyrian empire. The latter supposition appears to us the more probable, and that Pul, mentioned in later Scripture, was the second founder of the Assyrian monarchy, and is to be regarded as the Belus of Asiatic tradition, referred to by Herodotus.

But the memorable chapter in Genesis already quoted, presents to us, as we have stated, the remoter and first rudiments of the mighty kingdom, which preceded all others on the face of the earth, and was destined to hold so long a sway over Asia. In that chapter we are told, that "the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel or Babylon, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." It is added, that "out of that land went

forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city." With respect to the first clause of this quotation, there is a difference of rendering given in the marginal reading, of which the original is equally susceptible, as of that given in the text. That marginal reading is, "Out of that land he, *i. e.* Nimrod, went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh," and the cities which follow. Supposing this latter reading to be adopted, we should then have to conclude that Nimrod's enterprise founded all the great cities on the Tigris, and that his rule extended from the Persian Gulf, on both sides the Tigris, to the territory beyond Nineveh. But this would appear a somewhat doubtful supposition; and it would seem more probable that a monarchy of that extent was rather the expansion and unity of a later period. The only suggestion, added to that of the equal grammatical authority of the marginal reading, in opposition to the text, which ascribes the founding of Nineveh to Asshur, is, that Asshur being named afterwards as a grandson of Shem, in the account of his descendants, and the sacred historian having given the chief names in each descent of Noah's sons in distinct groups, the name of Asshur, if he is Shem's grandson, is out of its place in the verse we are commenting on, being in the group of Ham's descendants, immediately preceded by the names of Cush and Nimrod, and again followed by those of Ham's other descendants, Mizraim, and Ludim, and Canaan. The name Asshur is given in the third group among the sons of Shem, but without reference to his having founded Nineveh and other cities.

Yet one possible association remains to be noticed, which might account for the abrupt introduction of Asshur, considered as one of Shem's family, in the enumeration of Ham's children. It is supplied by the reference to the land of Shinar, where Nimrod had the beginning of his kingdom in Babel and Erech. Out of that land, the historian adds, went forth Asshur; intimating, possibly, if such be the right reading, that Asshur had been constrained, by the ascendant sway of Nimrod, to seek another home, and that he accordingly quitted the southern plain, and went and founded cities on the Tigris. If such was the fact, it was not unnatural for the historian, having referred to Nimrod's dominion over Babel and other cities in Shinar,

to introduce the circumstance immediately afterward, that out of Shinar Asshur had proceeded to form new settlements, and to erect cities on the Tigris. It is further specially noticeable also, that it is not said of Nimrod, that he builded Babylon and the cities around in Shinar, but simply that his kingdom comprehended those cities, or rather commenced with them. Moreover, there is in the prophecies of Isaiah, of a date so many centuries later, a most singular allusion, embodying probably a well-known and current tradition, and one, from its appropriation by the prophet, founded doubtless upon fact. "Behold," says the prophet, "the land of the Chaldeans: this people was not till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof: and he brought it to ruin." Does this language mean that the Assyrian, that Asshur and his race, founded the first cities of Chaldea, which is another name for Shinar, and that Babel and Erech and Calneh were of Shemitic origin, but that their founders, Asshur and his families, had been forced by the growing domination of the race of Ham, under Nimrod, to relinquish their first mighty structures to the latter, and to betake themselves to the higher countries on the Tigris?

One more supposition we must suggest, before leaving this statement of the sacred historian; and that is, that even adopting the marginal reading, and admitting that it should be "and he," Nimrod, "went out into Assyria," this very alteration would contain some intimation of a *preceding* occupation of the district referred to, by Asshur and his race, on account of its identification with Asshur's name; unless it should be argued, that, as is frequently the fact, the historian's allusion gave to the country the name it afterwards, from whatever cause, bore in his own time, without its necessarily signifying, that it bore such name before the supposed occupation of it by Nimrod. We, however, after giving, as we think, a fair exposition of probabilities in favour of either interpretation, return with rather increased confidence to the view suggested by the text as it stands, in preference to that of the marginal reading; and think that most probably Asshur, together with the families of his kindred, whether or not to be regarded as the founders of Babel and the other cities in Shinar, may have remained there some time after the confusion of tongues, but ultimately went forth from



Chaldea, and founded Nineveh and the other cities mentioned by Moses.

If we have argued these separate suppositions at considerable length, we think that the interest attaching to every reverent inquisition into the meanings of Scripture, in its brief but pregnant notices of these first times of the ancient world, is not small; and that every legitimate opportunity, consistent with our main design, of directing attention to the information of the sacred volume, may be usefully adopted, were it only for the effect such inquiries have, in intermingling the remembrances and associations of Divine truth, with the general course of these historical discussions.

Assuming the Assyrian origin of Nineveh, and that the "Asshur" given in the sacred text was not another Asshur of Hamite descent and a son of Nimrod, for this one other supposition also is possible; but concluding the Asshur mentioned, to be the one afterwards named, as the second son of Shem, and that he went forth from Shinar, to found the cities on the Tigris; we have then exhibited in these verses, the nearly contemporary origin of the two kingdoms of Babylon and Assyria, Babylon being the capital of the one, and Nineveh of the other; the one being identified with Ham's children, and the other with those of Shem. These kingdoms were afterwards united; Babylon at first becoming subjected to Assyria; and afterwards, revolting from Assyria, and conspiring with the Mede for the downfall of Nineveh. But these are the events of long after ages; and it will be for us, before passing to the review of these kingdoms in their flourishing periods, in their power, in their decay, and in their memorable fall, to contemplate awhile the picture suggested to us of their commencement and early progress.

The kingdom which was so speedily formed after the confusion of tongues in the plains of Shinar, is expressly assigned by the sacred historian to Nimrod, as its founder. That he also had directed the building of the mighty cities of Shinar, over which he held sway, of Babylon and Erech and Accad and others, may on the whole, perhaps, be fairly held as the more probable conclusion; or at least that he largely shared with his kindred, of Noah's other sons, in the enterprise which achieved these mighty labours. This we think credible from the general import of the statement in Genesis, notwithstanding the allusion in Isaiah,

which, as to its expressly local reference, might be still open to discussion. We have then the spectacle of cities of mighty structure springing up with rapidity in the first age after the Deluge, near the Tower left unfinished in the plain, and a subjugation, or perhaps it were more correct to say, a union of the population of these cities, under the dominion of one great-grandson of the patriarch Noah. Under the direction of another grandson, at a distance of many leagues to the north, other mighty cities are being reared, in an architecture of rude greatness and grandeur, and a beginning given to another kingdom which was to endure for centuries, and to give law for a period to the whole of western Asia.

Thus early were monarchies commenced, with their rapidly multiplying cities, their extending labours, their widening circles of agriculture, and the beginnings of divided pursuit, together with the newly-felt happiness of social intercourse, of repose, of hope, and of prosperity, while the shadow of recent awful judgments still brooded on men's memories and hearts. This was the picture of the New World, as opening its scene to the view of the survivors from the time before the Deluge,—of not only the patriarch Shem, but also, we cannot but think, of the ancient man, his father, who had lived with a former world, and had exchanged intercourse with Jared, with Lamech, and Methuselah. Doubtless, if it was the fortune of Noah so to have survived to the period of commencing empires among his race, and to have witnessed, in spite of his dissuasion and warning, the attempt of Babel, and its unimagined, unforeseen, and fearful punishment, in the division of his race in its speech and destiny; though he might feel solicitude, yet could the holy patriarch maintain unwavering hope and confidence in the Divine rule, which would direct all ultimately to a merciful issue. He could discern the bow of promise still arching the troubled scene of the world's opening story, and could look on, with the far-seeing vision of faith, to the times of the coming Deliverer, the Seed of the woman, when the broken unity of man's race should be again repaired and perfected, if not in that of a common speech and accent, in the higher and more beautiful element of the *spirit* of unity, in the reunion of all mankind to God and to one another in Christ, the adorable Emmanuel.

Thus would the great patriarch Noah assuredly have felt and

reflected, if the supposition be true, that he did survive to this first phase of the world's history, when its populations were constructing cities, and becoming organized into nations and empires. But supposing he did not survive, one survivor, from the times before the Deluge, we are certain there was, down to this late period of his life, and even to a period much later. The eldest of Noah's sons, one who doubtless inherited his piety, as his priesthood, the great ancestor of the Assyrian people, and of that family, which was to migrate westward to the vale of Sichern, the patriarch Shem, was alive in the times of Nimrod and Asshur, and witnessed the first kingdoms of the second human world. He saw Babel, and Calneh; he probably dwelt awhile in Nineveh; he knew of the founding of kingdoms on the Jordan, then a stream flowing into the Red Sea, and of the kingdoms in the Nile valley, with its depth of virgin soil; and it is not presumption to ascribe to him, both the solicitude, and the hopes, with which it was natural for this servant of God to contemplate the opening spectacle of the second progress of humanity.

Doubtless, there was in the rule exercised by Asshur, or Elam, or Nimrod, much of patriarchal and hereditary authority; though in the case of Nimrod, the language of the historian would seem to intimate something of more absolute, and perhaps usurped command. His power and ascendancy were at once attested and increased, by his being able to command the labour of thousands, in the building of the first great cities in Shinar, and perhaps in the district further north. Amid the exuberant fertility of a soil, affirmed by Herodotus, a thousand years later, to be the richest of all known in his time, for its corn and other productions, population rapidly multiplied, and the labour needed for subsistence being comparatively little, the surplus of labour available for other ends was superabundant. Hence, in the absence of the many arts and pursuits of traffic and commerce, which, in a subsequent stage of human progress, draw to themselves enterprise and toil, the greater portion of human agency, in these early periods, could be directed to whatever undertakings enlisted the consent of the many, or to which the exertions of thousands could, by the authority of one, be enforced. Architecture naturally offered itself, in this early stage, as the easiest, yet the grandest form, in which such labour could be embodied, both for use, for endurance, and for a monument to after-ages. It is by

this fact, of the immense proportion of surplus labour, and its consequent cheapness, together with the absence of trades and professions, that we are to account for the vastness and number of those works of architecture, in Babylon, in Nineveh, or in Egypt, which in after-ages were regarded with so much astonishment, and the huge remains of which fill the beholder even now with awe, as if they were mighty structures designed and reared by a different race of beings. The same conditions as to the state of the population, in the excess of unengaged labour beyond the strict exigence for procuring subsistence, will account for the vast armies, particularly of the east, in ancient times. Hence the armaments of hundreds of thousands, which Darius and Xerxes could command in their expeditions against Greece.

There is one reflection further, which, before quitting the view of the first combinations, and first enterprises of men in early time, demands our attention, and that is, the aspect, speaking comparatively, of high civilization, which meets us in this first page of human history, after the Deluge. We do not think that the fact has been often adverted to, or that it has met with the due portion of regard which its import merits; but it is no less certain and important, that the picture of the times immediately succeeding to the Deluge, or not long subsequent, is not that of mankind in a state of brutish idiotism and incapacity, not that of savages, without knowledge, without arts, without resource, struggling to exist on the chance products of the soil, or the river. In a word, man is not exhibited in revelation, in this first stage of his condition, as the species of savage, which philosophy is fain to represent him, and as advancing, in succeeding generations, gradually, and by many struggles and efforts, through the stages of competence, knowledge, and civilization. On the contrary, we meet, in the very first period of the history of mankind after the Deluge, with an aspect of society but slightly dissimilar, and not one particle inferior, to what would be discernible among their descendants this day, in the same districts in the east. We see the families of Noah's descendants betake themselves, at once, to works of combined enterprise, toil, and even of genius and art.

The picture of the first age is one of high civilization and knowledge; not of course of that knowledge, which modern invention and science have elicited; yet of that general knowledge, and intellectual development, to be this day met with, or even a

higher knowledge in many respects, in the same plains of Asia. This can only be accounted for, in accordance with the Scripture representation of the world's history as preceding the Deluge, as being one, if of much corruption morally, yet of art and intelligence, derived and inherited from the once perfect faculties and intelligence of the first man, who was not formed a savage, but was gifted with varied knowledge and capacity, as also once with the highest moral grace. Hence the age after the Deluge, was one of inherited knowledge and art. They were not novices in the culture of the field and the vine, in the use of animal labour, and in architectural structure. They inherited probably a knowledge of many inventions, lost in after-ages, and regained by even modern science, and application of thought. They shared, it is most likely, a still higher knowledge regarding the ways of God, and the mysteries of the universe, of which their great ancestor could not but have participated from intercourse with the sages of olden time before the Flood, and which he could not have failed to communicate to those of his posterity, who had not apostatized from the fear of the Lord. This view of the intellectual condition, of the knowledge, of the arts, and of the social union of the pristine age of man, even after the Deluge, cannot be censured as at all extravagant, by either those who muse reflectively on the intimations of Scripture, or those who are even moderately familiar with ancient learning and tradition. The general impression of the fact, as given in the Scriptures, it is competent to any intelligent mind to ascertain and judge of; while, as to the testimony of ancient literature, we may remark, what is perfectly notorious to every scholar, that the sages of Asia Minor, and of Greece, looked back to ages far higher in antiquity, and especially to the earlier generations of men in the east, as well as in Egypt, as the fountain-sources of learning and knowledge.

Nor was this the mere awe of ignorance, or conjecture in regard to the unfathomable past. The convictions of the noblest geniuses of Greece, respecting the higher wisdom of eastern antiquity, were founded on undisputed tradition, or rather on palpable circumstances of proof. Greece had received its very alphabet from Phœnicia, an alphabet but slightly varied from the Chaldee; and in Egypt, or in Babylon, Plato, and Herodotus, and Solon, beheld the mighty remains of former art, gazed on

inscriptions many centuries old, and listened to the traditions of mystery told them by priests and sages. Antiquity, to their conception, did *not recede to ignorance*, but *into a higher knowledge*, only some few rays of which had been transmitted down to a later age. Thus, again, do we discern the harmony of all genuine profane tradition and sentiment in the past, with the picture exhibited by revelation. Mankind degenerated in religious knowledge and wisdom, as they receded from the fount of light in the earlier world, and corrupted themselves with their own inventions. They degenerated further, and sank into habits of strife and piracy and debasement, in proportion as they removed to settlements more distant from the first centre of the race, and were involved in a struggle with inclemency and an uncultured soil, for mere subsistence. But contemplated in their eastern homes, and in even the first periods after the confusion of tongues, we see them engaged in the busy arts of social life; for all this is implied in their uniting to build great cities, and the erection of cities, which were the foundations of empires for many ages to come.

While a portion of the descendants of Ham, and of Shem, were thus giving commencement to monarchies destined to after-fame in the east, others of Ham's descendants had crossed the plain which separates the Tigris and the Euphrates, and pursued their way westward, till they arrived in the beauteous valley of the Jordan, bounded by the varied mountain range still further west; and they speedily allotted for themselves settlements, and built cities to dwell in, along the course of the stream to the south. The whole of this land, named after Ham's son, the land of Canaan, the Shemite patriarch, Abraham, found, some centuries later, well peopled and richly cultivated. Others pushed forward to the coast of the Great Sea, and founded the cities of Tyre and Sidon, which became emporiums of commerce, and even seats of powerful maritime empires for many ages. A still more enterprising colony of the Hamites, traversed the sandy desert to the south, and reached, after a few days' journey, the many mouths of that gushing flood, which overflowed in the summer season as a tide over the land, and left, as it subsided within its ordinary channel, a bed of soil whose fertility was almost as the garden of Eden. Here they eagerly took up their home, separating into families, or kindred, and pushing their settlements upward, in

the luxuriant valley of the river. Nor are these sons of Mizraim an idle or effeminate people. They do not take possession of Egypt like savages. Their mighty works, perhaps some of them those which are to be seen this day, attest their grandeur of thought and power. Smaller kingdoms are formed in Upper and Lower Egypt, and cities and temples erected, on a scale of magnitude, which overawe the imagination, and distance the labours, of modern times. Works of art, sculpture, painting, and writings, in varied character, mark the culture and genius of the mighty fathers of the Egyptian race.

Such is a brief account of the first age of human history, after the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of Noah's descendants, in their families and tribes, to form distinct settlements in different regions of the world, and to be the germs of the widespread nations and races, which now people the globe. Such, too, are the first political combinations, which took place so early in the eastern countries, nearer the original central home of mankind, in the age after the Deluge. We discern that, in the fourth generation from Noah, leaders and chiefs among his descendants had arisen, who, from hereditary and patriarchal authority, as being in the elder line of descent, or from eminent force of character, or valour, or perhaps violence, gained or usurped the command of tribes, and united them in the community of distinct kingdoms, which were the beginnings of empires for after-times. All these migrations and settlements, and beginnings of polities, must have taken place in the very lifetime of Noah himself, and of his elder sons. His years extended to, what appears to our imaginations now, the overwhelming period of three and a-half centuries, after the Deluge, and amounted in all to 950 years. In the vast interval of his sojourn on earth, subsequent to the Deluge, there would be ample space for that rapid multiplication, by which the first families of his sons grew into tribes and smaller nations, even in the time of the patriarch. We are not wont to think of the age of Noah as, to any considerable extent, contemporary with the early progress of the nations of his descendants; and there is felt something of mystery, when we try to comprehend the relation of these multiplying tribes of bold and enterprising colonists, to a still surviving common ancestor, an aged venerable man, on whom pressed the burden of near a thousand years, and who had known a former world, and the mighty races that had perished

with it. Added to the immense duration of his life, and the unfathomable lore of his remembrances, experience and knowledge, this great ancestor of nations had still higher claims to veneration, in the eminent piety which distinguished him, and pervaded his whole character; doubtless giving to his last years an indescribable charm of mildness and patriarchal benignity, combined with an habitual devoutness of spirit, such as had manifested itself in his earlier history, in the stern singularity of a holy life, and in the faith and fortitude which prepared for the Deluge. Combining these claims to unbounded regard, his example, authority, and injunctions doubtless availed to control, and keep in the right path, many families of his descendants, those perhaps excepted which were of the race of Ham. But the confusion of Babel broke up, very early, the unity of their general relation to the patriarch, and to one another; and, amid the silence of Scripture, we are left only to presume, that he dwelt amongst the families of his eldest son, and perhaps in the very home of that son, the patriarch Shem, who survived his father about 150 years, and continued to the time of the patriarch Abraham.

It will have been observed that, in the review we have taken of this first age of the progress of mankind, comprising a space of many centuries, and extending much beyond the lifetime of Noah, we have attempted nothing in the way of assigning a distinct, or probable chronology, to the great movements comprehended in this vast space of time. Neither have we sought to intertwine, with the Scripture notices of this period, the traditions of a high antiquity, transmitted in connexion with the ancient dynasties of the world. Some of these traditions and names, more particularly in Egyptian dynasties, would, if their chronology were exact, have to be placed at periods very near the Deluge. But their uncertainty, perhaps their fabulous character, claims not for them the labour of an attempt to reduce their chronology to a consistency with that of Scripture. Let it suffice that their general high antiquity be admitted, which fact is itself in harmony with the recognition, perceptible in the Scripture narrative, of the condition of Egypt as a distinct kingdom in Abraham's time, and the inference of its origin, many ages preceding that date. We have, in fact, confined our review to the notices of the world's unfolding story, as given by Moses in the chapter of Genesis



before referred to, and to that general period of time, comprising some three or four centuries, which would seem to be indicated, or necessarily to be inferred, as the age when kingdoms in different countries began to be formed. We are expressly obliged to mark the age of Nimrod, as that of commencing monarchies, and these, monarchies of mighty fame and endurance, by the historian's language: "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel;" and further, "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh;" which city also, as all know, was the commencement of a kingdom.

Though nothing is said of Egypt, or rather of the many smaller kingdoms on the Nile, the high antiquity necessarily to be ascribed to Egyptian civilization, from the mention of it in Abraham's time, throws back the period of its commencement also to a limit coeval with the time of Nimrod. The same method of inference, again, establishes the antiquity of colonization, and settlements, and the founding of cities, in the plain of the Jordan, and on the western coast. The Canaanite cities existed, and were flourishing, when Abraham, about two centuries after the death of Noah, migrated to Sichem from Chaldea; and, with respect to the coast emporiums of Tyre and Sidon, the connexion of the latter with the name of Sidon, the great-grandson of Noah, would point to him as its founder, as his father Canaan led the Hamite colonies towards the Mediterranean. Further, the well-known equally high antiquity of Tyre, and the traditions of its early flourishing condition and power, place its origin, as a city and distinct kingdom, in, or about the same period as that of Egypt, or of the founding of the Babylonian and Assyrian kingdoms.

Thus the antiquity of the entire group of the eastern kingdoms is either indicated, or fairly to be inferred, from the notices of Scripture in Genesis. Respecting the progressive colonization commenced by the Japhethites on the coast of Asia Minor, in the Ægean Isles, in Thrace, and westward to Macedonia, Greece, Illyricum, Italy, and Gaul, Scripture affords only the general view of the direction in which they proceeded; no powerful kingdom having arisen amongst them, till several centuries later. And, as the silence of Scripture would lead to this conclusion, so is it strictly consistent with the fact, as given in the traditions and histories of the Japhethite races. None of these point to a higher

period than about a thousand years before the Christian era ; which date would be about the same extent of time, after the first migrations from the east. The earliest kingdoms in Greece, in Sicily, in Etruria, to say nothing of Rome, lie within this limit. In fact the climate, and more especially the uncultivated condition of Europe, and the unchecked numbers of the wild animals which peopled its forests, make the Japhethite history, from its very origin, a wholly different one from that of their eastern brethren. Theirs was a struggle with the elements, with difficult cultivation, with beasts of prey, and, after their separation into small settlements, with one another ; and ages were to elapse, before settlements had cleared the forest, raised cities, gained wealth, or become capable of combining, under a common rule, for their common security. Western civilization will come under review in subsequent chapters. We here conclude these necessarily general references to the earlier kingdoms formed in the east ; and proceed to direct attention to the origin, selection, and destination of the Hebrew Race ; that people whose history, dating from the age next after the founding of the kingdoms of Babylon, Nineveh, and Egypt, has its conspicuous place through all after-time, as affecting the history of all mankind besides, to the latest ages.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ORIGIN AND EARLY DESTINATION OF THE HEBREW RACE.

Interest attaching, historically, to the Hebrew race, on the score of its remote origin, and present continuance as a distinct people—Notices of the Shemite ancestors of the Hebrews—The general lapse of mankind into idolatry, soon after the Deluge—No evidence of this peculiar form of apostasy before the Deluge—Necessity of a Divine interposition for the preservation of Theism—Striking exceptions of surviving piety—Melchizedek, Job, Jethro—Mystery of the *delay* of a general revelation to all nations—*During* such permitted interval, a single race selected for the Divine communications—Consequences, if such selection had never been made—Value of the Hebrew history, or national development, as an attestation, by facts and events, of Divine Providence—Selection of Abram, son of Terah—His migration and its sacrifices—Anticipations of a “better country”—Summary of his history, and its numerous bearings—State of the small kingdoms around him—Notice of Patriarchs, Isaac and Jacob—Incidents of Joseph’s history—Faultless excellence of his character and measures—Migration of Jacob’s family to Egypt—Sufferings and wrongs of the Israelites after Joseph’s death—Jewish history, after this time, to be resumed in connexion with subsequent empires.

THERE is much to awaken a deep interest, on historical grounds, and independently of all religious reference, in the story and fortunes of the Hebrew race. The fact that a people existed in the remotest times, separate in their whole character and national aim from all other nations on the face of the earth, refusing all community or intermixture with them, marking out a distinct destiny, and in truth fulfilling it, among the nations, struggling for its very being at critical periods, but surviving, though not a very numerous people, to witness the fall of all the empires that oppressed them, and surviving to this day, unmixed and undecaying, even though a dispersed and homeless nation, with a clearly traceable history, from the present moment, upward to their single great ancestor in the fourth century after the Deluge—that such a people should have held on its distinct story till now, no matter what were its characteristic differences, religious or social, and moreover should have exerted the mightiest influence on the

character and condition of all nations of the civilized world—this fact merits, in this its abstract form, a deep attention; and it would have received, from philosophical contemplatists of the history of our race, a much deeper regard, but for the Hebrew history being implicated, also, with the history of the one true religion, in the worship and service of Jehovah. Its being blended with, as well as attested by, the inspired communications of Heaven, operates on the minds which *revere* those communications, to something of its own disparagement, as being, which it truly is, much subordinate, in comparison of the higher dispensations with which it is intermingled; and again, this intermixture with the principles and development of a Divine system of dispensations, repels the *merely philosophic inquirer* from the contemplation of Jewish history, even on its own distinct ground of *fact*, as the astonishing progress and perpetuity of a distinct race, amid fiercest vicissitudes, for a period of nearly four thousand years. It is however the first obligation, not merely of devout believers in revelation, but of all *thinkers*, who would aspire to fairness, independence, and truth of conception, in reviewing past ages, and in tracing downward the streams of the various portions of the human race, to apply their minds steadily to the judgment of facts and events, when competently attested, *as they were in themselves*, and in their relative importance and consequences, as compared with other contemporary trains of events in the progress of mankind. Considered in this manner, we cannot think that any train of events in history is fraught with materials of deeper interest, or more perpetual wonder and admiration, than that exhibited in the origin, progress, destination, and influence of the Hebrew race. To a brief account of this progress, only, however, for the present, in its earlier stages, we shall in this chapter direct the attention of our readers.

We have already seen the manner in which the chief destinations of the human race took effect, in the first great period after the dispersion from Babel. We have seen, that the posterity of Shem were located, some of their tribes under Elam, to the east of Babylon, giving beginning to the Persian race, and spreading thence eastward to the Indus; some of their tribes, under Asshur in the district north of Babylon on the Tigris, in the plain to the west of the Tigris, afterwards called Mesopotamia, and throughout the whole territory ultimately included as the king-

dom. of Assyria proper. Others of the Shemite race founded colonies in Arabia, as the Shemite names, Seba, Sheba, Havilah, given to parts of it, sufficiently indicate.

The chief earlier settlements of the Shemite race lay in the plains of Mesopotamia. There, doubtless, as being nearer the original centre home of man's origin, the elder members of the Shemite family continued. There, the great ancestor of their tribes probably remained, as the patriarchal head of his people; surviving for a period of five centuries after the Deluge, and continuing his residence, perhaps not far from Nineveh, or in Ur of the Chaldees, till the time of his death; *unless*, as is the conjecture of not a few expositors, he had withdrawn from Chaldea to a district in Canaan, and there, known as Melchizedek, having reared the city of Salem, had maintained, in a calm and sequestered retreat, that knowledge and worship of the true God, which his posterity in Assyria were rapidly relapsing from, giving themselves to the worship of the visible host of the heavens.

Such rapid lapse of the human race into idolatry was now, in this patriarch's later years commencing, or had perhaps already long before commenced in all directions, among the tribes of mankind. It is possible that this degeneracy, in at least its practical form of revolt against the Divine rule, had become apparent and confirmed in thousands, even previous to the attempt made in the erection of the tower of Shinar; and that, combined with a spirit of distrust and fear, it had animated the tribes to the presumption of that attempt. Such presumption met with its appropriate, prompt, and mysterious rebuke. An afflictive and incomprehensible visitation lighted upon their utterance, and even their very thoughts, (since language is the instrument of thought); and, while it dissolved their combination by an invisible stroke, and dissipated all the purposes and hopes founded upon their union, it gave no obscure intimation, that the Infinite Creator, whom they were beginning to neglect, or, perhaps, to disbelieve in, though unseen, *held them in immediate check*, and regarded and judged, not their visible activities only, but the very *thoughts and intents of their hearts*.

Nevertheless, the propensity of all flesh to forgetfulness of the true God, was not thus arrested, but became gradually more declared, more obdurate, and more widely spread. Notwithstanding the undisputed and even recent traditions, current amongst

these first generations, respecting a former world; traditions of its first blest origin and its late destruction; of the creation and holy state of our first parents, and of their fall from innocence and expulsion from Paradise; of the instructions and warnings, transmitted doubtless from Adam, through his beatified descendant Enoch, to Noah, their still surviving, or but recently departed ancestor—notwithstanding these traditions of Divine interposition in the past, in the creation and punishment of the human race—traditions which were historically unquestioned, which were rife and certain, as the most familiar knowledge; and in spite of the solemn warnings and teachings of Noah, and, doubtless, of some of the elders of his family—forgetfulness of God, and a gradual fading away of the just, spiritual apprehension of his character, his perfections and his being, or at least, of his relation to the universe, advanced in all directions, and unbelief became more defined, more inveterate, more reckless, in every succeeding generation of men. Thus, when some three centuries had passed away; when the reminiscences even of the Deluge, and the confusion of Babel, had become remote history; when the chief tribes of mankind were departed to all lands, and were busy colonies and nations, enterprising, ardent, and intent; building cities, reaping rich harvests, clearing forests, traversing seas; and when Noah was in the dimness of age, and his elder son, and perhaps some of his families, were maintaining an almost solitary position on earth, in the service of the true God, and a hopeless protest against the example of the age; that example, in all directions, had become one of idol worship, and mankind, incapable of living without resource in *some* imagined Superior Power, had transferred the regard of their thought and spirit, from the Deity, to the chief objects visible in the revolving sphere of the heavens, to the sun, and the moon, and the constellations.

What a change was this, in the moral and religious history of mankind, and as viewed from a point of time, when it was probably wholly new and unexampled! For though we know little of the impiety of the world before the Flood, further than that it was extreme in its violence socially, and in its presumption against God, we are not necessarily to infer, that idolatry had become its crime. There is no intimation of such crime, but simply of wickedness and violence between man and man, and of

defiance of Divine warnings and judgments. So that it is *possible*, that till the age after the Flood, the worship of any created object as God, was a thing not preceded, or known, or even conceived of. But, even if such wickedness had become manifest before the Flood, that awful destruction had interposed its confutation and its limit on such unbelief. The power of God, after many warnings to the then existing nations of mankind, had asserted itself, and, in the deep and awful silence of the waters which overwhelmed them, had left the ominous proof of His notice of man's thought and life. After the Flood, Noah was still "the preacher of righteousness." The worship of Jehovah was celebrated in his family, and the families of his children. The second origin of the human race was cradled in piety, and righteousness, and prayer, and the very conception of idolatry shut out of human thought, as a thing unimaginable. But the holy patriarch lived to witness the unsteadfastness of human belief, and the progressive change which passed, first on the outward life, and then on the inner thought of the now growing tribes, that had sprung from his house; and, if extreme age, and dimness of apprehension, or even partial hope, did not, in some degree, make him less cognizant of the awful change extending around him, doubtless the thought of this apostasy, in the infatuated substitution of senseless objects for adoration, in place of the worship of the true God, must have wrought the profoundest grief and dismay in his spirit.

In the period subsequent to the decease of Noah, but still while his eldest son was surviving, the idolatry of the human race had become confirmed and general, insomuch, that in the immediate family of the patriarch Shem, and in that branch of it from which the ancestor of Israel was chosen, idol worship had become established; and it required a new interposition from Heaven, and a distinct call to one particular descendant of Shem, effectually to summon him to faith in the unseen Creator, to unreserved allegiance to his authority, and to a sojourn in a far and stranger land.

Yet must we not regard this picture, of the corrupted religious sentiments, as well as morals, of mankind, as applicable literally, and in its strongest import, to all the families of mankind without exception. It is due to the truth of man's moral history, and to the question of *the antiquity of Theism*, to note the fact of re-

markable and beautiful *exceptions* to the representation, which, in its general statement, is so mournfully true. The first form of exception to be maintained, is, as to the *import and degree* of the first deviations from the true spiritual worship of God; and it will be found, that tradition would support the inference, that visible objects were, in the beginning, *not substituted* in the place of the Deity, but adored as representations of his power and wisdom and beneficence. Further, it has been concluded by those who have gone deepest in research into the religious sentiments of antiquity, that, while the ignorant many, gradually descended into the fatuity of pure idolatry, there were still retained, among the more thoughtful of the priesthood, though held as mysteries for the initiated, those truths respecting the unity, spirituality, and knowledge, and power of the Deity, which had been originally revealed to man, and had been inculcated by Noah. The mysteries taught by the priesthood even in Egypt, and thence, it is supposed, transmitted to Greece, and taught in Eleasis, are judged to have comprised these great truths regarding the Creator of all, which were in such direct contradiction to the current practices of the nations.

This is the *first* exception to be affirmed, and which rests on unquestionable evidence, in regard to the extent, and to the depth of idolatry in ancient ages. *Another exception*, and one of deepest interest, is to be found in the history of particular families, in the ancient world, which lay out of the circle of the Abrahamic race. Confining ourselves simply to the intimations of early history in Scripture, there are several such instances, which meet us in unexpected and beautiful relief, as contrasted with the rest of the picture of the times, whether of Abraham, or of Moses. The first of these is that of the king of Salem, Melchizedek; a personage, whoever he were, whether the eldest son of Noah, as is judged by many, or some descendant of another line, revealing to us an example of not only genuine belief in the true God, but of lofty piety, united to a benignity and beneficence of character, which has given him a higher place, so to speak, in the heraldry of ancient holy men, than is ascribed even to Abraham himself; inasmuch as, to quote the apostle's argument, "the less is undoubtedly blessed of the greater:" nay, the holy, eminent character of Melchizedek, as a priest of the Most High God, exalted him to be a type of that Redeemer,



who is Priest, Prophet, and King, and who was to come in the descent of Abraham. What a proof is thus afforded, that even in the dark times, when Abraham's family were Syrian idolaters, and in the very centre of Canaan itself, there yet shone in Salem a true light kindled from heaven, and a king and priest upheld there the worship of Jehovah, and inculcated the lessons of genuine piety. And who can tell how long this light lingered, or how long the influence of Melchizedek's character was perpetuated in the families around Salem?

The *book of Job*, either written by the patriarch himself, or by Moses, or by an inspired patriarch preceding his time, reveals to us *another* glimpse of surviving theism in the old world, and one of sublimest import. Its composition is wholly independent of Hebrew history, and probably long preceded the time of the Jewish institutions; there being in it no allusion whatever to these, or even to the patriarchs of the Hebrew race. This is most remarkable. It is as distinct in its historical allusions, as in its locality, from Hebrew traditions; and must have been written by one of an earlier age, or at least before the time of the Israelite deliverance from Egypt. In its conceptions of the Divine nature and moral rule, it is identical with the whole spirit of revelation, and its range of thought as wide, and its sentiments as sublime, as those exhibited anywhere in the sacred volume. Here, then, in this scene, probably Arabia Felix, we have another picture of undecayed piety, showing the conceptions of Job, and even of the princes, his friends, (however unjust *their application* of their principles), either to have become unfolded and exalted by an immediate inspiration in their own time, or to have been thus transmitted, in their lofty grandeur, from the inspired utterances of Noah. Have we, in the chapters of Job, in the argument of Eliphaz, or of Bildad, some of the thoughts and words of a remoter teaching, from the devout fathers of the first age of the world? Are these lofty discourses on the principles of the Divine government, and on the sublimities of creation, the constellations of the heavens, our world hung upon nothing, and the peopled depths of ocean, echoes of the teachings of Methuselah, or of Enoch, or of the first father of the human race? At least, in this wonderful book we have proof, that idolatry had not yet become universal, and unexcepted amongst the nations, in the age whether of Moses, or of Abraham.

We cannot refrain, however it may lengthen these illustrations, from referring to a *third* example of such exceptions; and that is, the family of the Midian priest, the father-in-law of Moses. It is true, that Jethro was a descendant of Abraham, by his wife Keturah; but the instance of his piety avails to prove the long and lingering *endurance* of piety, and of true thought, in sequestered parts of the world, after the general prevalence of apostasy and wickedness.

But although such instances are important and interesting as evidences of the *fact* of such exceptions, they do not disprove the *tendency* to the *universal extinction of theism and piety* in the time of Abraham, and the absolute necessity of a distinct and peculiar expedient of Divine wisdom to provide an antidote to the awful change, and ultimately a reversal to its consequences. Whatever remains of theism were held by some few, whether in single patriarchal families, or in a particular class or school, as of the learned priesthood in Egypt, it is certain, that even in times as early as those of Abraham's father, the idolatry of mankind was becoming general, and absolute; and the corruption of manners, which was at once its cause and consequence, went on from degree to degree of aggravated wickedness.

In Syria, in Babylon, in the Canaanite cities, in Egypt, idol worship would seem to have become already established, and all the vestiges of true religion to have been effaced from human thought. The sphynx, the serpent, the crocodile, the ape, were become the gods of Egypt; and the monuments of rude sculpture, still remaining in that land, of an antiquity probably as remote as Abraham's age, give palpable evidence of the idolatry and corruption of the times. The principles of a primitive human faith, held by the priesthood in Egypt or elsewhere, if we are to admit the conclusions of Cudworth and others on this question, were held, or as the apostle's phrase would rather denote, *imprisoned* in unrighteousness; and priests and philosophers, if conversant with the traditions of higher truth, industriously concealed these, and abandoned the masses to the grossest idolatry and wickedness.

Such being the condition of the world, idolatry becoming inveterate and progressive in its desolating effect, the belief, the remembrance, of the One Supreme Creator, having faded away from popular thought, and no return of the fast-multiplying

population of the earth to its allegiance to Heaven, to be expected or hoped for; a *special interposition*, adapted to preserve and perpetuate the faith and worship of the Deity in the world, through all the ages of time, became indispensably necessary. Such Divine expedient was appointed, in *the selection of a single family*, to which should be communicated anew, under miraculous attestations, the knowledge of the true God; and which, becoming increased to a nation, should be miraculously guarded from its foes, located in the valleys of Palestine, and should maintain there, in the view of nations and empires, the flame of a true worship to Jehovah, together with the knowledge of his laws and dispensations, till the fulness of time should come, for the manifestation of that ultimate design of mercy and restoration for the whole of mankind, which was to take effect in the advent, death, and mediation of the Lord of glory.

Into the reasons of the *postponement* of this final manifestation, destined for universality in its aspect, purpose, and effect in the recovery of mankind, it is not permitted created minds to attempt inquisition. That there *were* reasons, of paramount importance, perhaps of necessity, in the vast system of the Divine government, considered as a whole, for a *period of delay*, we may be certain. The necessity of such interval being assumed, its character was to be one of *preparation*, and of progressive development in the dispensations of God for the recovery of man; during which interval, miraculous interpositions, and successive communications of Divine truth were to be restricted in the channel of a single people's history, and the rest of the nations were left to develop the bitter, desolating consequences of their wilful apostasy from Heaven.

Conceiving of this delay to the fulness of times, as part of the system of Divine government, we can discern how the ages *till* that period were to be rendered those of *gradual advance and preparation* for the coming of the promised Deliverer, the Hope of Israel, and the Desire of all nations. Further, it is permitted us to discern and trace the Divine wisdom, in the form and limit which the interpositions of Heaven took, in the first ages of man's apostasy. We can perceive that until the period should come, of a universal dispensation, no expedient would seem so benign and merciful, or one so adapted to fulfil the ends of Providence, as that of the selection of a family and race, to become the

depository of inspired oracles, a witness for Jehovah in the earth, and, even in its history, a monument of the beneficent purposes of Heaven towards man. The other possible *alternative* would have been, the having *no* people, on the face of the earth, to retain and perpetuate the knowledge of God, or to receive successive communications of his will. In that event, the period of delay, to the coming of the Redeemer, would have been one of *universal darkness*, and oblivion of the Deity, unrelieved, unmitigated by the presence of a single beacon-light of Divine truth.

This darkness would not only rest on the purposes of God, in respect of a spiritual redemption of mankind, but in a degree on the principles of his moral government in the present world. His providence would have wanted an *open manifestation*, a development and a history, such as we find now given, in the example of his dealings with the chosen people. All the inspired records of the past, and all the series of peculiar proofs of Divine interference in human affairs, would have been wanting. The picture of human affairs, through the whole of time anterior to the Christian æra, would have been the same *in Palestine*, as it was in Egypt, in Greece, in Italy, in the northern wilds of savage life, or the extreme regions of Asiatic settlements. The moral system of the world would have exhibited an unbroken scene of confusion, and, except in the speculations of here and there some thoughtful, honest inquirers, there would have been discernible *no vestige of the remembrance of the true God*. The world would have wanted all indications of the Divine existence, perfections, and government, except such as reason might extract from the aspect of creation, or from the confusion of human affairs. In a word, the past, from the very age of the Deluge, would have been absolute, universal, unbroken darkness, in respect of the relation of God to the world, the system of the Divine government, or the hopes to be gathered from the Divine purposes respecting man, in time and eternity; and the *first* point of light, breaking upon this dense darkness of the ages, would have had to be dated from the *advent of our Lord*, and not one moment earlier. *There, at that limit*, would have been the beginning of our spiritual knowledge of God; and, after the absolute reserve and silence of two thousand years, *then* would have broken forth the first voices from heaven. Christianity would have had to be ushered into the world *without relation to any*

*foregoing dispensation*, which would have gradually led to it, would have prepared for its attestation by preceding promises and foreshadowings, and provided for its facile and sure apprehension by typical instruction. The past, from the Deluge to the time of Christ, in which we now discern the presence and forthgoings of a Divine system of operations, must be, on the supposition assumed, considered as blotted out, or covered with darkness that might be felt, and the beginning of the shining of a true light from heaven on the world, would have been at the precise limit of Christianity, and not, as is now the fact, on the very dawning of time in man's creation, and downward through the ages, till the coming of a brighter sunshine. For the supposition on which we have reasoned involves, not only the absence of all Divine interference, but of all Divine *communication*, and consequently, of the inspired record of the earliest ages, given us through Moses, the leader of the chosen race out of Egypt.

These lengthened observations, however imperfect, will suffice to show the unspeakable value of *the dispensations of Judaism*, not only as preparatory to Christianity, but as embodying and revealing the special proofs of Divine government and interference in the universe. They further show, that unless such proofs were made from the beginning to all nations, and were proceeding contemporaneously in all parts of the world, being alike in their general character, and identical in their import and teaching; unless there were these continual revelations, repeated through the history of every nation, and in every district to which they had wandered, through all the period of delay; the alternative was, to *confine them to a single people*, which should be so located, as to have something of a central relation to the rest of the civilized world, and to have its history and fortunes interwoven, in many ways, in the conflict and succession of the great empires of civilization in antiquity. Assuming, we again repeat, the necessity of long delay and preparation, before the coming of Messiah; and further, that it was not deemed fitting or suitable to spread, over all the nations, a system of miraculous interpositions, which would have subverted the natural dependence of events, would have unsettled human purpose and industry, and finally perhaps would have defeated its own aim and meaning, by ceasing to be strictly miraculous, or to be considered as *teaching* anything; assuming these conditions, that

there *was* to be long delay, and that there could not be *universality* in a miraculous system, we are again brought back to the conclusion that to a single people, and in a single people's history, could be fitly unfolded and embodied, the needed revelations of the Divine perfections, government, and dispensations, preparatory to the advent of the Messiah.

In prospect, then, of the fearful period, in the life of mankind, that was to ensue, during the interval of unavoidable delay till the fulness of Messiah's time, a period of apostasy, ignorance, conflict of nations, and universal corruption; in view of the idolatry which, even before Noah had departed from the world, was spreading over the nations, and becoming with every generation more absolute in its character, more debasing and infatuating in its influence; it seemed fitting to the Divine wisdom, in its infinite benignity, to provide for the intermediate channel of its communications to a lost world, in the selection of a people, who should become the monument of Divine protection and care, the visible proof of the omnipotence of the one true God, and the depositary of just conception and belief regarding the Deity, in his incomprehensible and infinite perfections, his spiritual nature, his justice, holiness, and mercy, his universal and all-pervading presence, his awful power, and absolute control, over all existences and events through the universe. That people were, thus, to become the ark of Divine truth, else lost to the world, the witness for Jehovah, the recipient of unfolded laws and dispensations, the object of a visible Divine care, and preternatural protection; its religion was to present a perpetual front and resistance of Divine truth against idolatry; and its collisions with other nations, when true to the covenant of the Almighty, were to be the means of repeated rebuke and overthrow to the pretensions of the gods of heathen worship. This was to be the destination of whatever family the Supreme Ruler should select, for his visible favour and protecting care, for the next period of twenty centuries, from the days of Shem. The family so chosen, was to be in the descent of a Syrian idolater, dwelling at the time we refer to at Charran in Mesopotamia; one of the descendants of Shem, amongst whom, even at that period, idolatry was spreading, as well as amongst the families of Ham and of Japheth.

Twelfth in descent from the eldest of Noah's family, Abram,

the son of Terah, who was the son of Nahor, dwelt with his father, his brothers and their families, in Ur of the Chaldees, one of the primitive cities reared after the Flood, which, though said to be of the Chaldees, is supposed by some to have been situate not far from Nineveh, and in nearly the same latitude with Charran, to which the family of Terah first removed: by others, it is placed in Chaldea proper, or Babylonia, and not far from the head of the Persian Gulf. It should seem, that his father Terah, had conceived the intention of removing, with his sons and their families, to Canaan; whether, with the merely secular design of settling in a more fertile land, or whether moved by some secret monition from Heaven, such as his son afterwards more distinctly obtained, or whether Abram had already received the first command from the Almighty, and had communicated his purpose to his father Terah. By whatever impulse prompted, Terah removed from Ur with his family, with a view to settlement in Canaan; and they had reached Charran, in their progress thither, when their purpose was arrested by the sickness and death of the father, at the advanced age, considered in respect of the now fast diminishing range of human life, of two hundred and five years. The Divine command to Abram is thus recorded: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." We are not, we think, to interpret the summons to Abram, as one of strict isolation from his family, except in the milder sense of separation from his ancestral tribe, and as far as such isolation would result from his removal to a distant country; which was itself requisite for his perfect deliverance from the influence and associations of idolatry, as specially enforced by the belief and practices of his kindred. In fact, some of his kindred accompanied Abram in his migration; and if we are to date his call at Ur, and not at Charran, it would seem that all his immediate relations, including his aged father, accompanied him. If his call occurred at Charran, after his father's decease, then we still see him accompanied by his nephew Lot, who, equally with Abram, was one who feared the Lord his God. Thus when idolatry was fast becoming absolute and universal, and about to extinguish all remembrance of God, Abram was rescued from its brooding dominance, placed under conditions of distinct and solitary revelation, and made the heir of

a new dispensation of revelations, to be continued in his race, till the promised Deliverer should appear, in one of his own descendants, according to the flesh.

Such is the beginning of the Hebrew race; which was to multiply, to become a nation, to become possessed of the land now held by the Canaanite; to exist there, first, as a republic, or a general union of tribes, and then, as a powerful kingdom for ages; to become the possessor of new and continued revelations; after an apostasy, captivity, and restoration, to remain and prosper in Palestine for five centuries longer, animated with intense zeal for its oracles, till the coming of Messiah; finally, after his mission and death, to be expelled anew from its home to all lands; but yet to survive to the last ages for other manifestations of the Divine purpose.

It will not be needful, for the general species of review which we are attempting, to pursue with any minuteness the history of the father of the chosen race, or that of succeeding patriarchs, to the time of their captivity in Egypt, and of their first great historian, legislator, and leader from the borders of the Nile. The events are so familiarly known, that the briefest summary will suffice, provided only we can give to such summary the unity, and the general reference to the future, necessary to connect it with subsequent reviews of the story of the race of Israel, in its successive constitutions and fortunes, as a theocracy, as a monarchy, and last, as *a subject people to the successive great empires of the world*. We will therefore recite with brevity the chief events of Abram's life, and then, referring but slightly to the similar history of his sons and grandsons, pass on to the times of the sons of Jacob, in whose families the Hebrew race became finally constituted, and distributed as the twelve tribes of the house of Israel.

When the Syrian, predestined to so wonderful and enduring a preference in the Divine purposes, throughout the whole scheme of providential agency amongst men, received from Jehovah the summons, whether at Haran, or previously at Ur, to quit his country and kindred, and remove to a land, where he would be a lonely stranger, and a wanderer; the intimation, however conveyed, whether mentally, or audibly, or with visible miracle, *must* have come in a *definite manner*, admitting no doubt, or question as to its *source or authority*. And the fact of its Divine character being known, the obedience of the faith of Abram, as a new governing principle, was forthwith manifested by his prompt



and unquestioning arrangements, for departure to an unknown land, and to an untried condition of being. Such departure was not without its sacrifices, or its natural fears and anxiety. He had abruptly to tear himself, at last, from all his kindred, his nephew excepted; from all the associations of early life, and from the natural expectations and prospects of prosperity, repose, and the reverences of age in the land of his fathers. For his kindred were not in exigence or depression, but were part of that race of the Shemites, who were founding the cities of the east, and commencing the preparations of future empire and grandeur. Terah's eldest born made, however, no account of these attachments to his home and race, but resolved at once to depart, in compliance with the command of God, and amid circumstances of utter obscurity, as to his own personal future condition in the present life, whether it would be one of prosperity, or of trial and sadness.

It is vain to speculate on the many questions, that occur respecting this crisis of his life, as to the form in which the Divine intimation was given, or as to the general character of the believing patriarch's anticipations, when acquiescing with readiness in the new destination assigned him, and preparing for his departure and pilgrimage. One order of thoughts must, we think, be admitted to have mingled, however dimly, with the obscurity of his earthward anticipations, either at this commencement of his spiritual history, (for it was even now *spiritual*, and a *true life of faith*), or at a period not much later. The views we allude to, it is not usual to associate with the character and habit mentally of the patriarchal life; yet, we think, they must, on the authority of the later references of inspiration, be so ascribed to it. We refer to the *anticipations of a life after death*, in the presence of God for ever. Now the writer to the Hebrews expressly affirms, that the patriarchs sought a better country, even a heavenly one; in other words, that their anticipations and aims transcended this terrestrial sphere of things; and, that they acted as they did, in the exalted view of a "better" land, than any that their wanderings here either attained, or promised. We may readily admit, here, the comparative *dimness* of these anticipations, as to the character of the heavenly inheritance, and also as to the mystery of that method of redemption, by the coming Deliverer in the patriarchal race, through whom the way was to be opened to a

better destiny after death; and so it would still remain true, that the way to the holiest of all was not yet made fully manifest, and that life and immortality were to be brought to light by the gospel.

But *some* amount of dim revelation of immortality must, on the authority of the language quoted, be ascribed to the patriarchal spiritual life, unless such language is to be treated as a rhetorical fancy or exaggeration, which no reverent mind will, for an instant, admit the thought of. Considering then, that such anticipations gleamed from afar, and, as in faint, aslant rays, fell on the musing thoughts of the patriarchs, one interesting question, as regards the spiritual experience of the first of these pilgrims, arises, as to the *period* of the communication of this higher thought, and heavenlier light. Was it at the first bidding to leave Haran? or did such faith, in a faint, obscure, general form, constitute part of the *remaining belief* of the nations, transmitted from previous revelations, and doubtless taught by Noah to his race, as it had been taught long before, in necessary combination with the doctrine of a coming judgment, by Enoch, the seventh from Adam, whose wonderful removal had already given him to experience the mystery, and the blessedness, of the state of the holy ones after death? We are strongly inclined to deem this *last* supposition, to be the true account of the fact; that Abram, with perhaps others of his race, had heard of the traditions of a better hope for mankind, and now, that the command of the invisible Deity came upon him from the invisible world, that he obtained also, at this time, or not long after, clearer glimpses and assurances of an after existence, and a better hope. These loftier views at least, we know absolutely *were* vouchsafed to him at a later period; and whatever were the date of their commencement, they throw a new light on the spiritual life of the patriarchs. That life was not confined in its aspirations to the brief limit of man's present existence. They had other hopes; and so it came to pass, that they were content, here, to live and to die, without acquiring possession, in the land in which they sojourned.

Abram, soon after committing the remains of his father to the dust, quitted Charran, and with Lot, the son of his youngest brother Haran, who had died in Ur of the Chaldees, he, together with his wife, journeyed westward to the Jordan, and crossing the stream, probably at the pass called afterwards

that of Bethabara, took up his abode amongst strangers, in the town named, after one of the Hittite princes, Sichem. The story of the patriarch's life, from this period, comprehends the following chief events and changes; his first sojourn in Canaan; his removal, in consequence of famine, to Egypt, and his return thence, much increased in riches; and his amicable separation from his nephew, who chose the city of Sodom for his residence, while Abram fixed his abode in the plain of Mamre. After this, occurred his prompt and valorous conduct, in conjunction with the three young Amorite princes, in the rescue of his nephew and his family from the army of Chedorlaomer, whom he utterly defeated, recovering all the spoil they had gathered, and generously declining any part of it for himself. On his return took place his memorable interview with the aged priest and prince, who then ruled at Salem, Melchizedek, "a servant of the Most High," and a character still more venerated, and of higher dignity, than even the Syrian patriarch himself, who, as from his superior, received, at this time, "from the priest of the most high God, the blessing of Him who is possessor of heaven and of earth." The second renewal of the heavenly covenant with the patriarch was vouchsafed soon after, and the promise given of a posterity numerous as the stars of heaven; on which occasion it was that Abram, now in years and childless, received the Divine announcement with so immediate and absolute an assurance, that the memorable words are recorded of him, which made his belief, to all after time, the exemplar of faith and of its consequences, to all God's believing people—"And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

After this, at sunset, Abram offered sacrifice, and, sinking into sleep, received the intimation, that the inheritance of Canaan could not be granted, till after his descendants, to the fourth generation, should know affliction in a strange land. The birth of Ishmael follows; and the institution of circumcision, the conference with the angels, and Abraham's intercession to avert the impending judgment from the cities of the plain: then, after a period, there is given to Abram, the true child of the promise, Isaac, the son of Sarah. After the lapse of years, the climax of the aged saint's trials, and also of his trust, arrives, when he is commanded to sacrifice his son, and implicitly proceeds to execute the command. The voice of the angel arrests his hand, and the

patriarch receives, in reward for his wonderful trust in the Divine goodness, equity, and power, amid their fearfullest mystery, visions of the day of Immanuel—of that greater, infinite gift of Heaven, and sacrifice for man, to take place, in a far distant time, on the same height of Mount Moriah. The next events in his history, are the death and burial of Sarah, the marriage of Isaac to one of his Syrian kindred, and the birth of other children to the patriarch by his second wife Keturah, all of whom became princes and heads of nations dwelling in after times southward towards Arabia. In the end, the holy patriarch dies, at the age of one hundred, threescore and fifteen years; and thus, in what, *now*, the historian designates the *fulness of years*, he was gathered to his people, and was buried by his sons Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah, by the side of Sarah, for whose resting-place he had purchased the field, as a possession, from the children of Heth.

This is a brief outline of the history of the head and father of the Hebrew race. It has numerous points of interest, biographical, religious, theological, and historical. Its *biographical* incidents mark the general outward course of the Syrian prince; and these are in most faithful correspondence with the simplicity and character of the earliest times, and of a pastoral condition of life. *Religiously*, his history is to be contemplated in its series of spiritual communications, experiences, and actions, as constituting the patriarch's own personal piety and holy life as the servant of God. *Theologically*, his history has other meanings and wider references; inasmuch as the communications he received, bear upon, or rather form part and commencement of the special dispensations of God for the redemption of the world. The *historical* bearings of the patriarch's life, are those which attach to him, as the great ancestor of a nation and race, which should have its continuance and conspicuous place among the nations, to the very end of time; and also, more particularly, the relations which his own history occasionally bore to that of the nations then existing, and the kingdoms then forming, and the light which some of its incidents cast upon the condition of such kingdoms in his own age. It is in the latter respect, as considered *historically*, that the review of the patriarch's life falls within our present design.

These points of contemporary reference relate to the condition

of the human population considered generally, and to the particular kingdoms which were then advancing to power. The state of society in this patriarch's age, as we may clearly discern, is not one of ignorance or barbarism, but of an enlightened and polished simplicity, not surpassed in any period of time. There were exceptions of deep evil, in the rapidly increasing cities of the plain, and there was the general exception, of the spread of idolatry, extending among the Canaanites generally; yet the latter apostasy would not seem to have become absolute or universal, since at Salem there was doubtless the worship of the one true God. But the general aspect of life, individually, and socially, is not one of brutish ignorance and debasement. The aspect of human thought, as far as it is disclosed, not merely in the patriarch's own kindred, but in the words and actions of the Canaanite princes, and even of the Pharaohs of Egypt, gives not the impression of mankind, intellectually and socially, as a race just struggling upward out of savage barbarism, ignorance, and indigence. On the contrary, their mode of social life and thought gives rather the impress of a calm, mature wisdom, as the fruit of an ample knowledge, and an unblenched intellectual vision. The bearing of Eschol, Aner, and Mamre, and of the other princes of Heth, rivals, in its nobleness, and, if we may so speak, chivalry, the conduct of the Syrian stranger himself, who sojourned amongst them; whilst the welcome afforded him by the Egyptian king, and his pure-minded decision in respect of Abraham's wife, show a character of high dignity and generosity. In a word, and we feel much interest in contemplating the fact, the antiquity of the world, unveiled to us at this point in the history of Abraham, exhibits a much higher civilization, in its intellectual, social, and moral significance, than its state in later ages; thus confirming the sacred narrative in respect to the enlightened theism, grave wisdom, and varied knowledge of humanity at its source, in the Noachic family after the Deluge; and showing that the light grows as we mount upward *nearer* to that source, as was the very belief and confession of the ancients, and not that wisdom and civilization were the newly developed attainments of the race of man. This view of that past, which admits of the fullest demonstration, both from the notices of Scripture, and from the best traditions of ancient philosophy, invests the conception of ancient humanity with a dignity and interest far higher, than

could attach to such derogatory view of that period as is generally acquiesced in, though more from a certain indolence of inquiry, than from distinctly formed belief.

In respect of the kingdoms, forming in the east, in the time of Abraham, his life affords still more distinct intimation. There were small states or patriarchates, in Canaan, both in the cities on the Jordan, and in the central districts of Palestine. The city of Damascus already existed, and had risen to opulence. There was a kingdom, of considerable power, already rising in Egypt, under princes distinguished for their enterprise and equity. There was a kingdom of the Philistines, of which the capital was Gerar, formed of the towns on the coast of Palestine. And eastward of Syria, a powerful confederation of states was rising, including the kingdoms of Elam, Shinar, and others, which soon after fell under the sway of Nineveh. Thus the ancient world, in Abraham's time, exhibits movement, life, civilization, knowledge, generosity of conduct often, and political organization and enterprise. Nor let it be said, these instances were rather germs of states than states, and their cities mere aggregates of dwellings, without design or art. The remains of Nineveh, and of Egypt, confute all such notions, and prove that there was power, genius, and grandeur, in the works and combinations of the earliest ages of history.

It is true, that at this period kingdoms were only gradually forming, and were rather a loose aggregation of families or tribes, than nations compacted by a strong rule, and pervaded by community of law, of discipline, and of manners. The invading army conducted by Chedorlaomer, and the kings leagued with him, against the princes of the plain, was not a very numerous host, since it was speedily routed and dissipated by the tumultuary array headed by Abraham, and the Hittite princes. Chedorlaomer was king of Elam, afterwards named Persia, and another of the chiefs was Amraphel king of Shinar, or Babylon; both which kingdoms became in the next age provinces to the Assyrian monarchy of Nineveh, and each in succession, first Babylon, and then Persia, rose to be the ruling monarchies of the east. But the time for these events was yet distant; and for the next three or four centuries, the ancient history of the Bible confines itself to the fortunes of the separate patriarchal race, which was to grow into a mighty people in the

midst of strangers in Egypt, where the first powerful monarchy of the ancient world was to arise, and was, even in the patriarch's times, rapidly extending its sway, and multiplying its resources.

Passing over the incidents of the lives of the patriarchs Isaac and Jacob, we need only remark, that they partake of the same pastoral character as that of their ancestor, and reveal much the same stage of society, in the condition of the nations around them. There arose occasional dearth, even amid the fertile valleys of Canaan, and the necessity of resort to Egypt, to escape the peril of famine. In Jacob's time, the cruel transaction which bereft him for years of his favourite son, shows that a caravan traffic from the east towards Egypt had already commenced, probably in spices and precious metals, and unhappily also in slaves; for it is not probable that, even at that early period, the slavery of Joseph was the only event of the kind. The incidents which ensued in the story of the youth, thus sacrificed to the jealousy of his brothers, are of an extraordinary character, yet not at all inconsistent with the circumstances and changefulness of eastern history, even to the present time. Where everything depends on the will of a monarch, it may happen that the slave of to-day, may on the morrow become the favourite, the chief adviser, and second in command over a vast kingdom.

The successive experiences of Joseph's life, his menial rank as slave, his bitterer life under false accusation in prison, the base neglect which left him to his fate after his interpretation of his fellow-prisoners' dreams, and his touching appeal and entreaty to the chief butler of Pharaoh; the subsequent occasion of his liberation, and his sudden advance to the second rank in the kingdom; his filial piety and affection for his family, which long absence, and altered fortunes, but wakened into fonder intensity; his unbounded generosity to his brothers, which permitted not even their self-accusings, but construed the past into the merciful intentions of Providence; the prudence and sagacity of his administration; the reverent homage of his bearing to his dying father; and the lofty faith in which he himself died, enjoining that his remains should be removed to the land of the Canaanite; all form a picture of a life and character, the most touching, the most beautiful, the most devout and perfect to be found in all history. It is a life without an apparent blemish, and in which every succeeding incident serves to carry forward the develop-

ment of the character into new and more striking manifestations. And yet nothing in it is abrupt, or unnatural, considered as the story of Joseph's feelings, and course of action. It is seen to be the simple, and consistent unfolding, of one or two original principles, instilled into his tender spirit in childhood, by the words of a devout father; these were, the fear of God, involving not terror, but faith and reverence, joined to the simple, unsophisticated affections of a son and a brother. These principles sustained, governed, and prompted his whole career; coming forth in various operation, and undiminished lustre, in every conjuncture of his life. They mitigated the misery of the first moments of his wrongs, and of his bitter destination, by the hands of brothers, to become a slave. They solaced the gloom and loneliness of prison. They suggested the counsels of equity and forbearance in power; taught that wisdom of the heart, which far surpasses political sagacity, and added a graceful modesty to his high rank, which impressed others with a more fascinating reverence than pride could command. They enabled him, amid all vicissitudes, to hold aloft the standard of a testimony for God, and to exhibit without fear or compromise, his faith in Him who is invisible.

Such was the youth, the man, the ruler, who, under the once seemingly mysterious direction of the God of his fathers, was to provide a home of long sojourn, for the selected race of his family. If we have lingered over his history and character, it has been not wholly because of their intrinsic interest, but on account of their relation to the succeeding centuries of Israel's story, as introductory to the location of his family in Egypt; in which country it was, that Jacob's band of seventy souls, including his children and grandchildren, multiplied into a nation, and attained the growth and numbers which prepared it for conquering and occupying the inheritance of Canaan. We have, for the like reason, given a more prominent place and expansion to the history of Abraham, as being introductory, and giving its own peculiar character and direction, to the patriarchal age of the Hebrew race. With respect to the sojourn of Israel in Egypt, the high authority of Joseph shielded their families in security and respect during his lifetime, and for some period probably after his death. Their whole destiny, under Providence, resulted from his elevation and power. They obtained the richest pasture



land for their settlements, on the frontier of Egypt looking towards Palestine; and with the progress of years, their numbers multiplied to a degree, which gave ample prospect to the chiefs of their tribes, that the promise of Jehovah to Abraham was being made good; that they were not destined to decay and extinction, but to grow into a powerful race and nation. After Joseph's death, and the death of that king, who had raised him to power, a succeeding monarch, who, as characterized in the touching simplicity of the Scripture allusion, "knew not Joseph," began to regard with other feelings the stranger people settled on his frontier, and to contemplate their number and rapid increase with alarm and suspicion. We know the measures which followed, and how the Hebrew race were devoted to toils and cruelties which brought down the special regard of Heaven on their sufferings, and which issued in those mighty interpositions of the hand of God, through his servants Moses and Aaron, that first rebuked and confounded idolatry, then punished the Egyptians by a fearful visitation, from the throne to the cottage, and finally led forth the race of Abraham from captivity, and overthrew the armies of the Egyptians in the depths of the Red Sea.

We shall suspend at this point our review of the Hebrew history. To carry it further in this part of our plan would be to extend our survey much in advance of the history of other nations, with which the Jewish history becomes more or less intermingled, and would either leave allusion to such nations unintelligible, or if given with fuller explanation, such explanation from other histories would again have to be repeated in its own proper place and order. In reviewing the history of each of the greater monarchies which are to follow, we shall have necessarily to touch on the parallel stages in the progress of Jewish history, and in fact to keep continually in view more or less, the condition and fortunes of the chosen race, till the period of the advent of Messiah. There are many reasons for thus making the chain of Jewish history to occupy in some sort a central place and relation in respect to other histories. One reason is, that its course and chronology are familiarly known, and, that it becomes thus a clear line by which to measure and note the chronology and progress of other nations. In the next place, we must remember that such prominence is due to Jewish history,

because for a thousand years after even the call of Abraham, we have really no *other* history, and the most authentic notices of other nations are those given in connexion with the Jewish history in the sacred Scriptures. But another reason which should influence us in thus constituting sacred history as the leading line of events for frequent reference is, that our review of other nations is designed to illustrate their bearing on the fulfilment of prophecy, and, on the preparations of Providence for the promulgation of Christianity; and such bearing is chiefly to be traced in the influence of the successive empires of the ancient world on the condition of the Jewish race, on their character, and on the preservation and increasing publicity of their Scriptures. The dispensations of Heaven, preparatory to, and in progress towards the advent of Messiah, and the promulgation of Christianity, were *concentred in the Jewish history*, and the relation of other empires to *this*, determines any influence they exerted, under Providence, in preparing for the fulness of the times of Messiah.

In respect of our chief aim in this review, therefore, Jewish story must have a leading place as a chain of reference, though it will not be necessary to consider it further in any separate chapter. Hence we shall take it up in its chief remaining periods only incidentally, under the review of Ancient Empires. We shall need to glance but briefly, and that in reviewing the times of the *Egyptian* Monarchy, to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, to the conquest of Canaan, to the period of the Judges, or even to the flourishing age of the Hebrew Monarchy; but after that period, the *captivities* of Israel and of Judah will require fuller notice in considering the empire of *Assyria*; and the *restoration* and subsequent prosperity of the Jews in Palestine will fall under the review, successively, of the *Persian* and *Macedonian* empires. For the present we leave the chosen race of Abraham's descendants in the pasture lands of Goshen, or toiling in the brick-kilns of their Egyptian masters; and turn our attention to trace the rise and advance of the *kingdom of the Pharaohs*, which was the first of the monarchies that attained to greatness and power in the ancient world, preceding in this respect, by some considerable interval, the kingdom of Assyria, as to its more flourishing age.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE KINGDOM OF EGYPT.

Multiplied historic associations connected with Egypt—Outline of changes in its history of 4,000 years—Ancient authorities regarding Egypt, Herodotus, Manetho, &c—General considerations in disproof of its fabulous chronology—Notices of Egypt in the narrative of Scripture—Its condition in Abraham's time, Joseph's, Moses'—Probable periods of its greater structures—Age from the Exodus to Samuel's time—Period to the invasion of Judea by Shishak in the time of Rehoboam—Period to Hophra, the last of its native dynasty—Conquest of Egypt by Cyrus, by Alexander, and the succeeding kingdom of the Ptolemies—Influence of Egypt on ancient civilization, and on Greek philosophy—Egyptian art and science—Its learning not united with speculation, and its purest notions remains of ancient tradition—Relation of Egypt to the Hebrew race—In Egypt the climax of idolatry first attained, and there visited with rebuke and disaster—The miracles wrought by Moses, refutations of idolatry—Overthrow of the Egyptian army at the Red Sea, and widespread fame of the Divine interpositions—Recovery of Egyptian power in the period after the Exodus—Age of Mæris, of Sesostriæ, and of succeeding names, to Shishak—Increasing power from the time of Shishak to Hophra—Utter improbability of its subjugation and fall—Yet this predicted;—effected by Nebuchadnezzar—by Cyrus—by Alexander,—New dominion to arise, as the result of the conquest of Alexander—Alexandria founded—Greek kingdom of the Ptolemies—Jewish settlement at Alexandria—The Septuagint version—its important bearings—Spread of Greek civilization in Egypt; yet combined with the intenser prevalence of idolatry—Anticipative references to the extinction of idolatry in Egypt—Concluding notice of its architectural remains.

THE enduring interest attaching to the ancient kingdom of the Nile, and awakened by the very name, is felt generally, on account of its remote antiquity, as one of the earliest of the world's polities; on account of the existing remains of that antiquity, their vastness, rude grandeur, and extent; on account of the mystic learning presumed to have flourished in it, ages before that of any other people, and to have been the source of philosophy and letters to historic times, the fount of wisdom to the Greeks, and, through them, to the civilized world through succeeding ages; finally, on account of the immense duration of its history, continued with varying fortune and changing dynasty,

yet with almost unwaning prominence amongst the nations, from near the age of the first settlers on the Nile under Mizraim, down to the age in which we live. Other ancient kingdoms rose to be mightier for a time, and became more illustrious in their history, in their power, influence, literature, national character, and historic names, but no kingdom of the ancient world fetched its greatness from so remote an antiquity, or presented to succeeding ages, as its monuments exhibit still, so grand an impress of the past, and so vast an endurance, without material diminution of its resources or power, down to the very commencement of the Christian era. It is true, the race of Mizraim lost in an earlier period their rule on the soil of their fathers, and were humbled for ever into political debasement by the conquests, first of Persia, then of the Greeks and Romans, and last of all, of the Saracens, Turks, and Mamelukes; and now the remains of that race, which was once, and for thousands of years, sole possessor of Egypt, exist in the few hundred thousand Copts, who are the hewers of wood and drawers of water to their contemptuous masters. Yet after the fall of the ancient dynasty, the power of Egypt as a separate kingdom increased under the Ptolemies; after the conquest of Cæsar, it became the most important province of the Roman empire; and in the period of the Saracenic rule, the caliphate of Egypt became the most splendid and flourishing of all the conquests of Mohammedanism.

The remains of the majestic labours of the first ages of its history, which survive to our day, and will be probably a spectacle to the last periods of time, are the most astonishing of any on the surface of our globe; and attest a character of thought and schemes of enterprise, rude indeed in their greatness, yet overwhelming in their effect and impression. The wonder, not unmingled with awe, felt in beholding these remains now, was felt in remote bygone ages by the people of successive empires, which have since sunk, and fallen into equal ruin; by Roman conquerors, and before them, by the Macedonian hero and his warriors; still earlier, by the Persian invaders Cyrus and Cambyses; and before even their time by Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army. But Babylon has left scarcely any trace of its situation; Nineveh is a mound; and even of Athens and Rome, the remains now existing are the ruins of structures, none of which had been reared when the pyramids were already

hoar with the colours of some twenty preceding centuries. The most illustrious citizens of Greece, or of Rome, stood wondering, as Englishmen wonder now, in view of the pyramids and ruined temples along the Nile; and with an identity of emotions and associations, which would seem to connect the observers of distant ages, as if they all stood assembled together there, in one gathering. The astonishment felt now by Europeans, was felt not less by Cæsar, by Alexander, and earlier still by Plato, Pythagoras, Herodotus, Anaximander, Thales; perchance even by Homer and still earlier visitants to the Nile, who, some twenty-five or thirty centuries ago, may have listened in the temples of hundred-gated Thebes, to the mystic lessons and traditions of an earlier lore, communicated by the priests and hierogrammatists.

The valley of the flood and the bulrush, still remains a habitation for men; while the traditions of its ancient monarchy, like its own mighty stream, flow from an unexplored source. Its fertility and resources are unexhausted, and it has still a kingdom, with cities and temples, risen amid the broken columns of a far-distant age. Thebes, and Memphis and populous No, lie in ruins; but Alexandria, the capital of its second kingdom, remains, together with other cities from the period of the Ptolemies, and of the Roman emperors. In the limit, from the time when the valley was without inhabitant, and the Nile flowed in the silence of its primitive channel, with no culture on its shores and no boat on its waters, to the present moment, when travellers are measuring the shadow cast by its pyramids and columns, what a history of human existence, enterprise, and vicissitude is comprised, and unfolded to the view! The arrival of Mizraim, and the families which he ruled as patriarch; their first and speedily rewarded toils of culture, and their first schemes of cities, constructed on the scale of eastern grandeur seen by them at Babylon and Nineveh; the consolidation of the increasing populations and tribes into separate kingdoms, upward as far as the cataracts of the Nile; the next change, of the amalgamation of these into a single powerful monarchy, and the succeeding period of commerce and arts and arms, and of the first of those Titanic structures which perhaps overlook the Delta of the Nile at this day; after this, the devastating invasion of the Shepherd Kings, who possessed themselves for several generations of the land of

Mizraim ; then, after their expulsion, and the restoration of the ancient rule of the Pharaohs, the visits of the Hebrew Patriarchs, and the final sojourn of their families, till these multiplied into a nation, and became objects of alarm, and of oppression ; the ensuing interposition of the One True God, the God of their fathers, in behalf of these strangers, resulting in plagues, in the open confusion of the pretensions of idolatry, and in the final overthrow of Egypt's forces at the Red Sea ; the reign, after a long intervening period, of Moeris, the wisest of Egypt's kings, who formed the lake that still bears his name ; the conquests of the far-famed Sesostris ; next, after his age, the flourishing period of the Mizraim race, under Pheron, Proteus, and Cheops ; the invasion of the Nubian king, Sabacon or So, and his usurpation of the throne ; the reigns of the native monarchs Sethon and Necho, and their failing struggle with Nebuchadnezzar, who reconquered Carchemish and other Syrian acquisitions from Necho, and pushed his conquests into Egypt itself as far as the gates of Heliopolis ; the succeeding invasion of Cyrus, after the fall of the Babylonian empire, and the entire subjugation of Egypt by his half-mad son Cambyses ; the successive revolts under the Persian administration, until the Persian empire itself fell before the arms of Alexander, and Egypt became the rich prize of the Macedonian conquests, and the seat of a new capital, remaining to this day a flourishing mart of commerce between the east and Europe ; the formation, after Alexander's death, of the Greek kingdom of Egypt under the Ptolemies, and the ensuing brilliant period of Greek civilization, literature, and philosophy, prolonged with its many results and influences, in Egypt, for nine centuries ; the conquest of Egypt by Cæsar, and its vast importance as the richest province of the Roman empire, and the granary of Italy ; the introduction and spread of Christianity along the Nile, and beyond its cataracts into Nubia and Abyssinia, and the abolishing for ever of the idol abominations of its temples ; the age of the great theologians, orators, and martyrs of Egypt, now a Christian state, and the epochs marked by the names of Dionysius, Origen, Athanasius, and the Therapeutæ, who copied Essenian monasticism in the retreats of Nubia ; the rise of the second and later Platonic philosophy at Alexandria, and its mighty influence in perpetuating the reign of Greek literature ; the sudden extinction of Greek and Roman civilization, and of

Christianity itself in Egypt by the Saracens, and the spread, not of idolatry, but of Theism, blended with the impostures of the false prophet; the flourishing period of the Fatimite Caliphs; the invasion and conquest of the Turks; the revolt and power of the Mamelukes, their reunion to the Ottoman empire, and last, their brave resistance in the 18th century against French invasion:—such is the range of historic revolutions, from Mizraim's age down to our own time, which invests with an unspeakable interest the land of the fertilizing flood, and papyrus.

In addition to these historic sources of interest, we may refer to those mighty structures, which remain from the most distant age of the Mizraim dynasty, to attest its early magnificence, and its mystic lore. The Pyramids, the cities of the tombs, the remains of temples, the columns and obelisks, and ruins of towers; above all, the characters, only now become partially significant to modern Europe, which were slowly traced thousands of years in the past; and more impressive still, the very forms of human life, embalmed in the silence of death—forms which once trod the streets of Memphis or of On, which gazed on the Sphynx, or the Memnon, or the Pyramid of Thebes; all these seem, in the awful stillness which reigns around, in the localities where they are yet beheld, silently to appeal from the past to the thought of humanity in the present, and to teach a perpetual lesson of the frailty and fleet succession of human life, amid the very perpetuity of structures wrought by human hands.

The informations of early time regarding Egypt, in the channel of profane history, we obtain first from Herodotus, the celebrated Greek historian, who visited Egypt about the period, 450 B.C., and received from the priests the account he gives of its ancient dynasties; next from Manetho, a priest of Heliopolis, who lived some 200 years later, under the Ptolemies, 260 B.C., and whose history is lost, except some fragments or extracts, which are preserved in the writings of Josephus, and of Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, the former of whom wrote in the time of Vespasian, A.D. 75, and the latter in the reign of Constantine, A.D., 300. They are the legendary traditions given by this priest of Heliopolis, and thus preserved by later historians, which give such a multitude of dynasties in the ancient monarchy of Egypt, and thus carry back its origin centuries before the Deluge. To the falsity of these pretensions, we shall afterwards make reference. The next

writers who give some account of Egypt are Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, the first of whom flourished about 44 B.C., and the latter about 25 A.D. Both these authors, nay all the foreign writers named, visited Egypt, and beheld with their own eyes its manifold wonders; while Manetho, as we have stated, was a native Egyptian priest. It will be seen, that Herodotus is by far the most ancient historical authority; and further, it must be borne in mind, that his statements, as well as those of his successors, were fetched from the same original source, namely, the legends of the priesthood, or the interpretations they gave of ancient inscriptions, long anterior to their own age. In the next place, these inscriptions themselves furnish another source, if it be not rather resolvable into the same, of historic information regarding the dynasties of Egypt. As far as the priests of Memphis gave to Herodotus correct interpretations of such inscriptions, the information is of course the same.

Those who can decipher these inscriptions now, appeal probably to some of the very same memorials of a preceding antiquity, on which Herodotus gazed in silent wonder, and which his informant priest was interpreting for his instruction. Only in our own time, has the discovery been made, of the mode of deciphering these hieroglyphic characters on the obelisks and temples of Egypt, and but little advance has been hitherto made in penetrating their import. The sagacity of Dr. Young first lighted on the method of deciphering the famous Rosetta stone, now in the British Museum, and after him, M. Champollion continued his researches on the monuments of ancient Egypt with eminent success, proceeding, however, still on the principle discovered by Dr. Young.

It is to be admitted, that the references of these inscriptions concur with the statements of the historians named, in ascribing an endless series of kings to the former monarchy of Egypt; and so far, they repeat, or aggravate the chronological difficulty of such antiquity, as compared with the chronology of Scripture. But they are to be met by the remark, that these inscriptions themselves, if rightly so construed, are inconsistent with other great facts of ancient history, and that the dynasties mentioned must either be repeated titles of the same monarchs, or the names of parallel dynasties in contemporaneous monarchies formed at first on the Nile; or are, finally, the bold inventions, or fabu-



lous traditions, inscribed by the priests themselves, who wrote them.

Thus the unfathomable antiquity ascribed to the Egyptian monarchy, and derived from the dynasties affirmed by Manetho, and adopted from him by Josephus, Diodorus, and Strabo, is a pretension resolvable ultimately into the fabulous traditions of the Egyptian priesthood, whether orally transmitted, or traced in imperishable characters on obelisks and tombs; and it is liable to be subjected to question and criticism, like any other order of antiquarian pretension; like the chronological tables of Hindostan, or the fables of the Chinese empire. And as a general consideration, which we think to be fairly conclusive of the whole question, we may remark, that such pretensions, as regards the remote age of Egyptian dynasties, are wholly unsupported by the circumstantial proof which invariably attests a true chronology in a nation's existence. They have no *accompanying history*, except what is evident fable; but are for the most part a bare catalogue of names.

But further; such imputed antiquity, reaching back many thousands of years, is inconsistent with the known historic age of Greek civilization, and in fact of all European or western civilization. Such antiquity claimed for Egyptian history, is best tested by its relation to the history of the more contiguous nations of Europe. But the history of Greece dates, in any credible form, from a limit not more remote than about 800 years B.C.; and its traditions affirm, that its civilization came from Egypt and Phœnicia; by the migrations of Cecrops to Attica, and Danaus to Argos, from the former; and of Cadmus to Thebes, bearing with him the mystic treasure of the alphabet from Phœnicia. But how was it possible such migrations should have been delayed to about 1000 B.C., or perhaps two centuries later, if civilization had flourished in Egypt thousands of years earlier? On the latter supposition, Cecrops or Danaus, or rather their remote ancestors, should have passed to Greece at least 2,000 years earlier. But Greek civilization, as we have said, dates from about 800 B.C.; and this limit would be consistent with the earlier civilization, actually to be computed for Egypt, through the medium of Scripture, making it anterior to that of Greece by about 1,200 years.

We remark, finally, on this question of the Egyptian dynasties,

which naturally demand notice on account of their inconsistency with Scripture chronology, that not only are they unsupported by the proof of contemporary remote incident or history, and contradicted by the actual recency of other national history, or even traditions, of Asia Minor, of Greece, of Italy; but the perplexity of names in the hieroglyphic inscriptions has long suggested to those best skilled in deciphering them, the explanation that the catalogues of dynasties deemed successive, are either repetitions of the same dynasties under different names, or, which is more probable, are, as we have said, the catalogues of contemporary dynasties which ruled over earlier small states on the Nile.

In the preceding observations, it will be perceived, we have discussed and proceeded upon the informations or traditions furnished respecting Egypt in the channel of profane history, or Egyptian memorials. We have now to call attention to those notices of Egypt, which occur in the track of the Scripture narrative, and which rest not only on the authority of distinct and indisputable record, but have that consistency among themselves, and in their relation to the times they belong to, which at once attests their truth and fidelity.

Far earlier, then, than the remotest date assigned to the conquests of Sesostrius, we have a history, part of it probably penned in Egypt, which gives authentic, though only occasional notices of its state, in the periods which it refers to. By means of the Scripture record, we have access to gaze upon its antiquity and its progress, at a point earlier by a thousand years than the date of any other history, and in succeeding periods at intervals, till we reach the very commencement of profane history in Herodotus. We have the evidently genuine and sincere relation given of the early times of the Egyptian kingdom, by the great Hebrew legislator who was born there, and who, while master of its wisdom and lore, and the once destined heir of its throne and riches, relinquished the prospect of worldly grandeur, and devoted himself to the meditation of oracles and faithful traditions, derived from a higher source, in order to his becoming qualified, under the destination of the Divine will, to effect the deliverance of his own oppressed race, and the overthrow and humiliation, for a time, of the pride of idol belief, and the power of tyranny, in that land, which was the primæval seat of their domination.

Availing ourselves of these ancient records of the books of

Moses, which apart from other sources of attestation, bear in their simple, positive narrative, the inimitable stamp of truth and candour, we are enabled to contemplate the kingdom of Egypt at different early periods; and the notices given, albeit indirectly, of its state in these periods, are perfectly consistent with the general authentic chronology of the ancient world, are consistent with one another, with the successive phases of general history, and with the gradual progress of civilization through the first ages of antiquity. They are incidental and brief, being collateral to the historian's main subject; but they are natural, such as we should have expected to find them; and what is highly worthy of remark, they are progressive, and exhibit an interesting picture of the advancing stages of the first great polity of the world. The phase given in Abraham's time is not the same as that of the writer's own age; and again, in writings long subsequent to those of this first historian, the references to the Egyptian state, which meet us along the track of the sacred volume, and even in its prophetic portions, bear the same character of progress, in analogy with the world's general history, till they place us at last within the limit of general historic tradition; and then, they are seen to concur with such tradition.

The reign of Sesostris is supposed by some to have commenced not many years after the departure of Israel from Egypt; in which case, his rapid course of conquest and invasion, spreading over Syria, Asia Minor, and even into Thrace, and eastward towards the Tigris, took place during the very years of the sojourn of the tribes around Sinai; and they were thus detained in the unknown seclusion of the Desert, where none could imagine a nation's existence possible, while the wave of desolating conquest swept over the rest of the nations. Whether this supposition of the times of Sesostris be correct, or whether his reign is to be placed some long interval later, there is no reference made to him, or even to Egyptian history further for many centuries, and that simply because none of the movements of that kingdom interfered with the tribes settled in Palestine. We hear not of the land of their first home and bitter oppression, afterwards, till we reach the times of their monarchy, when Solomon cultivated intercourse with Egypt, and married one of its princesses; and Jeroboam fled thither to escape the suspicion of planning the revolt

of the ten northern tribes. Afterwards, in later Jewish history, the references to Egypt become more frequent; though now, more intermingled with prophecy, or with the historical allusions of prophecy, than in the distinct narrative. The more imminent perils of Israel lay on the east, from the gradual advance of the conquests, first of Nineveh, and afterwards of Babylon. Yet soon in their seasons of alarm, contrary to Divine injunction, they sought at times the aid of Egypt, which however always proved, in the prophet's language, a broken reed. But those occasions bring before us the names of later monarchs, till we come to the very last of the Pharaohs, in the race of its independent native rulers. We meet with the names of Necho, Sethon, Sabacon, and finally of Pharaoh Hophra, or Apries, that last of the Pharaohs of the ancient dynasty, who was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, and slain by Amasis, the chief of his generals.

The pictures given in these notices are, as we have said, progressive, and so, while differing, are yet consistent with one another, and with the progress of the ages they belong to. The incidents of Abraham's sojourn there, betoken the life of a simpler age, and the condition of a people in the first stage of their political progress; not an empire in its power and pride. Its sovereign bears himself not as an imperious despot, but as a ruler over no great territory; his courtiers being denominated his servants, just as were the retinue of the Hebrew stranger who visited him. The next period of reference, giving us a glimpse of the Egyptian people, evidently shows the kingdom in a condition politically much advanced. We have in Jacob's time, a powerful and arbitrary sovereign, and chief ministers and administrators; and we have brought before us incidentally, though in melancholy relation to Israel's domestic history, the remarkable fact of a caravan traffic from the east having already commenced with Egypt, in which the spices of Arabia, and probably products from India itself, were brought for exchange with the corn, the cotton and papyrus of the Nile. Such is the glimpse of the time of Joseph's arrival there as a slave. Many years later, when time had wrought much change on the youthful brow of the exile and the ruler, as well as upon his brothers and aged father, the condition of Egypt is indirectly disclosed to us, as that of an extended kingdom, demanding more systematic rule and organization, which, in a season of distressing hardship,

were given to it, or were perfected, by the wisdom, moderation, and firmness of the Hebrew Vizier Yet in these times, there is no indication on the part of Pharaoh, or of his courtiers, of the pomp and the arrogance of power, nor even of the rife and infatuated idolatry of the next phase given us of their history, some 250 years later.

There would appear to have existed no powerful army, nor perhaps any large organized force, in Joseph's time. The priestly class had great power, yet not such as to render the government intolerant or persecuting, nor so as to prevent the elevation, or counteract the authority, of the young Hebrew stranger. We hear not, either, of gods or temples; and, though doubtless idolatry prevailed, it is possible that it had not reached the intensity or degradation of a later period. Nor is any allusion made, as to the grandeur of any existing national works; yet, notwithstanding the silence of the Scripture narrative on this point, the general opinion of chronologists seems well founded, that the series of greater structures had been then commenced, which afterwards rose in such numbers, and such Titanic proportions, in the Delta and valley of the Nile.

Two centuries later, and the picture is greatly changed; and the condition of the people politically, evinces immense progress. We then have armies, both of foot soldiers and cavalry; and a power in the state, capable of enforcing the slavery and toil of some half a million of grown-up men. We have a powerful priesthood, jealous for their gods and temples; and the gods themselves have become multiplied into endless diversity.

The tyranny, the cruelty of Pharaoh's rule towards the Israelites; the haughty and infatuated conflict, of both the monarch and the priesthood, against plagues and warnings; the riches of gold and jewels diffused among all classes, which became afterwards the borrowed spoil of the migrating foreigners; and the vast array of the pursuing forces, in chariots and horsemen, which were overthrown in the Red Sea—all these circumstances give proof of a kingdom well organized, probably now extending to the cataracts of the Nile, and rapidly increasing in numbers and in resources, from the ever-repeated and inexhaustible fertility bestowed by the Nile.

To this age also, we are probably to ascribe many of the greater structures of Egypt. The slavery of the Israelites in the

making of bricks, denotes the immensity of the works of architecture then in preparation. After a considerable interval, the reign of Moeris followed, about B.C. 1308, in which works were reared, which remain to this day. Then followed dynasties of which all history is silent, except it be in the tradition of their names, as given by Manetho, and inscribed on their sculptures. During these ages, while the Israelites continued organized as a republic in Canaan, throughout the period of the Hebrew Judges, the power and grandeur of Egypt went on increasing, and doubtless those mighty works were multiplied over the land, which attest that grandeur. It is possible that some of the pyramids and catacombs, which are to be gazed on now, were projected and completed in this period, from 1400 to 1100 B.C., which, in Hebrew history, intervenes from the settlement in Canaan to the monarchy under Saul; that the statue of Memnon, formed to be responsive to the rays of the rising sun, was in this interval sculptured; that the colossal busts now to be seen in our Museum were at this time patiently chiselled, from vast granite blocks laboriously moved down from the quarries of Syene; that, while Othniel or Gideon reigned in Hebron, or while Samuel as a child served in the temple at Shiloh, or when he gave judgment as ruler at Mizpeh, some of those inscriptions in hieroglyphics, which are to be read this day at Luxor, were slowly traced. Such suppositions are within the fair province of historical conjecture; and though it is impossible to verify the date of Egyptian monuments with certainty, there cannot be error in referring a vast number of them to the interval we have named in the contemporary progress of Hebrew history. And the general allusions we have made, may serve not unusefully to notify, though only in a loose manner, the age of their commencement, and the succeeding intervals of their progress and grandeur. In the total absence of all native historic associations by which to vivify this blank interval of the Egyptian State, from after the exodus to Solomon's time, our chief means of realizing its advance is by some such conjectures as those we have offered.

The chief of the monarchs assigned by profane history or tradition to this period, are Moeris, Sesostris, Pheron, and Cheops. The date of Moeris' reign is placed in 1308. His reign is said to have been distinguished by much wisdom, and energy, de-

voted to the achievement of great works of public utility. The vast lake Moeris, on the left of the Nile, not far from Memphis, and communicating with its canals, is supposed to be the work of his reign. Next after Moeris follows Sesostris, whose foreign conquests, probably greatly exaggerated by fame, are related to have extended even to India. His reign by one account is placed about 1290 B.C.; but Josephus, deeming him to be the Shishak of Scripture, brings his reign down to about 950 B.C.; and this difference of the dates, is an instance of the obscurity and uncertainty attaching to this part of Egyptian history, where there is little more than a succession of names given as a basis for conjecture. If we overleap this interval from the exodus to Solomon's reign, only adverting to the fact that doubtless Egypt was rapidly advancing in these centuries, and multiplying its architectural monuments, and further, that its chief sovereigns were the few already named, we reach, in Rehoboam's time, a secure footing; and whether Shishak be the same as Sesostris or not, we gain certainty, that there reigned at that period, a monarch of great eminence, and capable of directing the arms of his country to foreign conquest. We ought, indeed, rather to mark the gleam of light as falling on Egyptian history in the preceding reign, since even an Egyptian princess became one of the wives of the greatest of Israel's monarchs, in the time of his unhappy apostasy. But the political power of Egypt is more directly announced by the attack on Jerusalem in his son's reign, being the first instance in which Egypt had interfered in the affairs of Palestine. From this time we shall find, not, it is true, many invasions from Egypt, but yet that its power and policy were looked to by both kingdoms of the Israelites, sometimes with dread, and again sometimes with a forbidden trust, as a counterbalance to the more formidable kingdoms, rising to empire, on the east of Palestine. Without recounting the history of movements on the side of Egypt, which affected the condition of the Jewish people, we will simply advert to the succession of Egyptian kings, as brought before us in the Scripture narrative. The chief of these after Shishak, of Rehoboam's time, are Sethon, of the time of Sennacherib, king of Nineveh, 713 B.C., Pharaoh Necho of the time of Josiah, king of Judah, 619 B.C., and of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and Pharaoh Hophra, or Apries of the time of Zedekiah, who was deposed by Amasis, one of his

generals; after which change of dynasty, the conquests of Babylon, then those of Persia, place Egypt under foreign rule. The reign of Hophra or Apries, therefore, as it brings us to the limit of Scripture history, so it ends the ancient dynasties of Egypt; and the subsequent history of Egypt is to be followed in the narrative of Herodotus.

The period from Solomon's reign to the Babylonish captivity, or from 1000 B.C. to 588 B.C., is the period of the most flourishing reigns of the original native monarchy of Egypt, and it terminates with its fall; Egypt being involved in the same final subjugation under the conquests of Babylon, as the kingdom of Judah, and all the surrounding states of Palestine and Syria. In the reigns of Shishak, Necho, and others, the Egyptian monarchy, no longer, as through all preceding ages, if we except the conquests of Sesostris, restricted to its native limits, extended its views to foreign conquest, and prepared to contest with the Assyrian monarchy the dominion of Syria, if not of all the east. Shishak, as we have seen, captured Jerusalem, and reduced Rehoboam to a partial dependence on Egypt. In Hezekiah's time, Sethon boldly matched the forces of the Nile against the numberless hosts brought from the east by Sennacherib; and though defeated in battle, his kingdom was preserved from Assyrian invasion, by the destruction of Sennacherib's host before Jerusalem. After the prosperous reigns of other kings, Necho carried the power of the Egyptian state to a still higher pitch. In addition to works of splendour and utility executed by him at home, he made his name dreaded abroad; and in a contest with the armies of Assyria at Megiddo, in which unhappily Josiah, the good king of Judah, took part with the Syrians, Necho utterly routed the Syrian armies, captured Carchemish, and even became master of Jerusalem, deposing Jehoahaz the elder of Josiah's sons, and electing his brother Jehoiachin to the throne; Jerusalem being subjected to an annual tribute, of a hundred talents of silver, and one talent of gold. He was succeeded by his son Psammiticus, and this last monarch by a grandson, Pharaoh Hophra, or Apries.

Apries was at first successful in his foreign enterprises. He extended his conquests to Phœnicia and Cyprus; and Zedekiah, now become subject to the king of Babylon, having sought alliance with Hophra, the latter prepared, with the united forces of



Egypt and of Palestine, to engage in conflict with the army of Nebuchadnezzar. On the approach of Hophra towards Palestine, Nebuchadnezzar raised the siege of Jerusalem, and advanced to the encounter with Egypt. The Egyptian army was stricken with panic at the appearance of the Chaldeans, and precipitately retreated to their own land. Egypt thus proved a broken reed to Zedekiah, as the prophet Jeremiah had forewarned him. Nebuchadnezzar resumed the siege of Jerusalem, and effected its final capture and destruction. After this the revolt of Amasis against Hophra ensued, and, amid the contests and distractions of the kingdom, Nebuchadnezzar, having first captured Tyre, advanced to Egypt, defeated Hophra, and spread desolation and slaughter through the cities of the Nile. Amasis now succeeded, under Babylonian authority, to the throne; and it was in the time of his son Psammenitus, that the Persian conquest followed, under Cambyses, which for ever crushed the native race of the Egyptians.

The invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar took place in the year B.C. 570, which was about eighteen years after the removal of Judah into captivity. The Babylonian kingdom after the conquest of Syria, did not itself long flourish. Being the continuation of the Assyrian empire, through the revolt of its former governor against Nineveh, it held for a time the sceptre of the east. But after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, the power first of the Medes, and next of Persia gained the ascendant, and Babylon itself was captured by the arms of Cyrus and his uncle Darius the Mede. Egypt, in the interval of these contests, regained a momentary independence. But the Persian conqueror soon advanced his invading force against it, and brought it to subjection. On the death of Cyrus, it again revolted; and in the year B.C. 525, the invasion of Egypt by Cambyses followed, which resulted in its more complete subjugation. During the next two centuries, Egypt continued subject to Persia, with, however, intervals of unsuccessful revolt. In the year B.C. 332, the victories of Alexander broke the power of Persia, and his conquests extended over Egypt. Alexandria was built by him in the next year, at the western mouth of the Nile, and colonized with Greeks, and a numerous settlement of the Jews. After Alexander's sudden death, in the partition of his empire, Egypt fell to the lot of his general Ptolemy Lagus, B.C. 323; and from

this period to nearly the beginning of the Christian era, the kingdom of Egypt is essentially a Greek kingdom, ruled by Greek princes, the descendants of Ptolemy ; its native race held in subjection by a Greek force ; all administration, office, and influence held by Greeks ; and the language and literature cultivated by the ruling class, in Alexandria particularly, and in the chief cities, being the Greek. Thus complete was the revolution wrought on the ancient soil of Mizraim's race. Even the next great political revolution in Egypt left unchanged the Greek character of its civilization. Cæsar's conquests which brought Egypt, B.C. 48, within the circle of Roman dominion, left it still a Greek province. Thus, from the building of Alexandria to the Roman invasion, the Greek kingdom of the Ptolemies continued for nearly 300 years, with not the faintest struggle on the part of the ancient race to recover their ascendance.

Having given this general view of the history of Egypt, both as traced in the channel of Scripture allusion, and as obscurely indicated in the traditions preserved from remote times, we have now to offer some remarks on the influence of Egyptian learning on the speculations of ancient philosophy, and on the course of Egyptian history in its relation to the dispensations of Divine Providence ; after which we shall briefly allude to the existing remains of Egypt's ancient art and grandeur. Egypt holds the primary place in the history of philosophy and civilization, considered in their purely secular origin and progress. From Egypt the philosophy of the Greek speculatists of Asia Minor, developed afterwards in the schools of Magna Græcia, and finally attaining its climax in those of Greece proper, derived its first impulse and perhaps many of its leading principles. Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes ; Pythagoras and disciples of his school in Elea ; and finally, Solon, Democritus, and Plato, looked to Egypt with reverence, as to the primal source of knowledge, and resorted, most of them, in succession thither, to seek instruction in its mystic lore. Hence, also, even the great Hebrew legislator is himself mentioned in Scripture, as being learned in all the wisdom of Egypt.

Thus in a highly important sense, though in a degree impossible to be determined even conjecturally, Egyptian learning was the fount of the sublimer conceptions, which were unfolded into more systematic and beautiful speculation in the subsequent

schools of Italy and Greece; in the philosophical maxims of Pythagoras, and in the sublime imaginations of Plato. As far then as the philosophical speculation of antiquity received impetus and aid to its first efforts; as far as any foreign teaching acted upon the thought and reasoning of the Greek race, and through Greece on the speculations of Roman literature; we have to trace up these speculations, for something of their first inspiration, impulse, and germ, to the mystic lessons taught on the Nile. This is a high and peculiar rank held by Egypt, rather than by Assyria or Babylon, in relation to the rest of the nations of antiquity, previous to the Christian era; and it is one indisputably due to it, by the admission of the earliest of the great masters of Greek philosophy.

Let it not be forgotten, however, that the influence thus to be ascribed to Egyptian learning was chiefly the influence of what may be judged an awakening principle and impulse, and not that of any very ample contribution, either in the amount or distinctness of the conceptions communicated. It consisted in the transmission of some general notions or traditions of belief, regarding the great First Cause, the origin of the universe, and the laws of human duty, which, whencesoever derived, the Egyptian priesthood jealously withhold from the multitude, and meditated for themselves only in the form and for the mere purposes of idle speculation. Such juster views were realized by them in no sort of relation to their practical life. If they conceived aright to some extent, regarding the unity and spiritual nature of the Deity, or the laws of justice, purity, and beneficence, they held such notions passively as higher intellectual mysteries, and in short, retained or imprisoned the truth in unrighteousness. They wilfully restricted its influence in themselves to the domain of the intellect alone, resisting its rightful and natural tendency to extend its dominion to their feelings and conduct. And as regarded the multitude, they held back the vision of truth wholly from them, and inculcated, instead, by their precepts and example, the most revolting imaginations and usages of idolatry. This is the condition under which the hierophants of Egyptian lore, and after them, the guardians of the mysteries in Greece, held whatever juster views they possessed respecting the true God; and to this guilty reticence of the ancient philosophy, the apostle would seem to be alluding in the first chapter of his

Epistle to the Romans; implying that not only were just conceptions of the Deity obviously inferrible from the works of creation, but that such juster views had been actually attained by the more thoughtful class of the heathen world, and had been held and restrained in unrighteousness. "Because," says he, "that, when they knew God," that is, knew in a great degree of his sole existence, nature, and attributes, as the only true God, "they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." Nor will any one familiar with the philosophy of the age immediately preceding the Christian era, as exhibited in the speculations of Cicero—himself the best expounder of the Greek philosophy unfolded in Plato's writings—deny that such pure and lofty conceptions respecting the Deity had been thus attained, or received by tradition, and that they were held in passive contemplation only, and guarded from the access of the vulgar masses.

To what extent such purer theological notions had been received, through Pythagoras and Plato, from Egypt, may be difficult to determine. But that some communications, of a higher knowledge than the vulgar dreamt of in ancient ages, were thus derived to Greece through the philosophers named, and several others, is a fact unquestioned; nor is it less certain, that such communications from the Egyptian priesthood involved, in part at least, the higher views we have already spoken of, regarding the invisible Author of the universe. Some inscriptions on the Egyptian temples attest the ancient possession of such views. One of these, quoted by Plato, is "To the Invisible God." It may be difficult to judge, even in a general manner, what other elements of thought, whether theological or philosophical, were imported into the systems of Pythagoras or Plato from the Egyptian source. Theology, or just notions of the Deity, in that benighted period of universal idolatry, ranked in the esteem of thoughtful inquirers, as the noblest philosophy, and would be comprehended under that name. Yet it is probable, or almost certain, that elementary notions on other subjects, some merely fanciful, others more accurate, on the laws of the universe, and the proportions of numbers and lines, were acquired by the Pythagorean philosophy from the learning of Egypt. Astronomical observations had for ages been a favourite study on the Nile; and geometry had been cultivated to a considerable extent, with a view to the constant remeasurement of land, after each

overflowing of the Nile, which effaced many former landmarks.

There is one circumstance more which it is necessary to mention, in order justly to estimate, and determine the limit of the Egyptian influence on ancient civilization. It relates to the form in which the elements of Egyptian lore came into the possession of Greek philosophy, and the different cast and character such elements were wrought into by the action of the Greek intellect. The sublimer notions of Egyptian contemplatists, whether many or few, were held by them in a dogmatic form, without analysis, without proof, without improvement, from age to age. They were mere general maxims, or rather perhaps fragmentary remains, of truth, which had been transmitted from earlier epochs, and had not been subjected to deep meditation in their import, their inferences or relations, but handed down in the general form of assertions, or beliefs, without change, unless it were the diminution of their bulk, or the obscuration of their meaning. In Egypt, they resulted in no after thought, in no speculation properly speaking; but were simply repeated, with a passive and awful regard, as mysteries from mind to mind. The Egyptian intellect, like that of oriental nations generally, may have been meditative, after a sort, and disposed to contemplation; but it was not piercing or active. It was disposed to acquiesce in contemplative wonder before what it saw, not to question the deeper meanings of things, or to resolve the mass of some general form of knowledge into its constituent parts. This passiveness of intellect, as we have said, is characteristic of the oriental mind; if we may not rather say, characteristic of all the Shemite and the Hamite races.

The oriental philosophy, whether before or after contact with Christianity, has exhibited much of the imaginative in its systems; but of the severe processes of proof, of consistency, or of just inference, it gave no token; and hence its inventions were visionary shows, and contemplative amusements. Such has its manner of thought ever been from earliest time; such it still continues. Such was the contemplative, or perhaps simply apprehensive manner, in which Egypt learned, and retained any mysteries of theological truth; and in this the briefest, and least developed form of their assertion, did such elements pass into communication with the intellect of the western world;—the in-

telleet of Greeks, the subtlest minds of the race of the Japhethites. But they remained not, after this contact, in such generality. Instantly, or, at least, in no long period from their acquisition, such elements were submitted to analysis, expansion, and processes of proof. The Greek intellect, essentially analytic, discriminative, and dialectic, found in the sublime remains of ancient truth, the very gold-field for its philosophical genius; and in Plato we discern the dogmatic assertions of the Egyptian priesthood, if from them derived, wrought out into beauteous system, in which their meanings are discriminated and defined, their methods of proof unfolded, their relations traced, and their further consequences indicated; till from tradition, they are become science; from bare assertions they become philosophy; from mysteries of contemplation, almost as hidden from Egyptian thought as their hieroglyphics are to us of this age, they become resolved and deciphered into meanings of convincing authority and demonstration.

Let it be further remembered, that such elements of higher truth, which contributed to waken the intellect of Europe, in the times of idolatrous darkness, anterior to the promulgation of Christianity, were in truth the remains of an earlier Divine revelation, propagated from the teachings of Noah, who had himself been enriched with the illuminations of heavenly wisdom, and not only had been preserved, with his family, to repeople the earth, but had been a preacher of righteousness, as well after the Deluge as before. We have, again and again, sought attention to this fact, of the transmission of the principles of heavenly truth, from the world's second great progenitor to the families of his descendants, and of the survivance of these, though in diminished amount and obscurer statement, from age to age amongst the nations of antiquity. We have insisted on it, in our references to that early apostasy of mankind into idolatry, which made a new interposition from Heaven necessary, in the selection of a family, which should receive successive miraculous revelations, and preserve these to the times of Messiah's advent. We showed the proofs of such traditions of Divine truth, subsisting, to an advanced period, in their purity and brightness in Canaan, under the priesthood of Melchizedek; in Arabia Felix, in the times of Job and his fellow-princes; and in Midian, where Moses in his exile found a home, and an altar consecrated to the

worship of Jehovah. And we wish to insist upon it here again, in affirming the possession of any remains of higher elements of truth among the priesthood of Egypt, and the communication of such higher conceptions of the Deity to the deeper and more speculative minds of Greece. Admitting such to have been the fact; admitting, as is judged, on apparently good evidence, by Cudworth and others, who have explored all the recesses of ancient learning, investigated all its remains, and weighed every fact bearing upon this question, that purer traditions of theistic truth, and moral law, subsisted among the priesthood in Egypt, and formed the substance of their communications to European inquirers at their temples; no possible account can be given of such conceptions, amid the general intellectual darkness of idolatry, except as having been derived from an earlier source. For there is no shadow of allusion, as if they had been given forth as the result of profounder speculation by the hierophants who cautiously divulged them. These priests themselves made no such pretension, but deemed any higher truth, which they avowed, to be worthy of belief, as resting on the more secure and awful authority of descent from their ancestors in a remote age.

Manifest as are the evidences of Divine power, wisdom, and goodness in the works of creation, yet the mass of mankind disregarded those, and became infatuated with the foul imaginations of idolatry. The possession of higher conceptions by the initiated few, was the result of communications independent of, and foreign from, their own tendencies of thought. They received such truths from traditions, oral or written, perpetuated from the beginning of human history. That the fullest communication of all the Divine knowledge attained by the patriarch Noah, was made to his children, it is impossible to doubt. The faithful preacher of righteousness before the Flood, was not silent after its awful wave had sealed his warnings with their verification. He who fearlessly denounced impiety, who resolutely opposed the example of all mankind, and prepared an ark before their gaze, did not, in his subsequent years, withhold from his children, his grandchildren, and still later generations of descendants, the mighty secrets he knew, of the glory and perfection of the Deity, of man's first innocence and fall, and of the hope of a coming Deliverer, who should be the seed of the woman. Doubtless, all

that this servant of the Most High deemed essential to be known and perpetuated, in relation to the Divine existence and perfections, and the moral rule exercised over man, he must have announced both publicly and in private, and impressed on his descendants with a solicitude deepened beyond conception by the remembrances of a perished world. In consonance with this assumed certainty of patriarchal teaching, we have the fact of the proofs of such original common traditions of truth, amongst all the nations spread upon the earth. Notions regarding man's temptation and fall, regarding the Deluge, regarding sacrifices, and the consecration of one day in seven to the worship of God, survive in different nations. Hence, as such notions are collected and combined, they are seen to form a body of traditions so peculiar, as to leave no possible explanation of their origin and agreement amongst various nations, except as being derived from one common source, at the very head-spring and commencement of human history.

With respect to Egypt, we may, we think, now assert further, that Mizraim, and the families of which he was the chief, bore with them thither, not only the treasures of a Divine revelation (for in such light, being inspired utterances, must the communications of Noah be regarded); but they went forth possessed of a varied knowledge of the sciences and arts of the ancient world, with which the father of Mizraim, as well as their older ancestor had been familiar. Hence we are to account, we think, for the early and rapid development of national enterprise in architecture and other modes, both on the Nile and in the plain of Babel; nor is it wholly improbable that some of the now existing monuments of the Egyptian race bear the impress of the colossal manner and grandeur of the antediluvian world. Whether they made much advance in art or science is doubtful; while, as to the nobler inheritance of Divine truth which they shared, it is certain, that in the mass of the people, such knowledge, after a few generations, gradually faded into vagueness, unbelief, and oblivion; and they abandoned themselves, with the eagerness of infatuation, to the invention and worship of false gods. Yet the traditions of earlier belief were preserved, as mere speculative lore, among the priestly class, and were taught from age to age, as mysteries from a remote source, and perhaps no longer capable of being fully comprehended.



But we have said more than our limits fairly allowed of respecting the relation of Egypt, in virtue of her traditionary communications, to the philosophy of Europe; and must now direct attention to those events in Egyptian history, which mark its relation to the history of the Hebrew race, and thus illustrate the dispensations of the God of Israel. There are three such periods of Egyptian history, meriting to be noticed in this view; the first, that of the collision of idolatry with the manifestations of Divine power in the time of Moses; next, the occasional interference of Egypt in Jewish history from the times of Solomon to the Captivity, and the fall of the dynasty and race of Mizraim as predicted in prophecy; and lastly, the era of the Ptolemies, or Greek kingdom of Egypt, which involved Palestine under its administration, and led to the promulgation of the sacred oracles at Alexandria in the language of Greece. These periods are not only distinct phases of Egyptian story, but they are considerable parts of such story, which illustrate, each in its own signal but very different manner, the purposes and dispensations of God.

The monarchy set up by the race of Ham on the Nile, and which, dated from the age next after the Flood, was destined to endure till near the Christian era, very early reached, as we have seen, a high pitch of prosperity and grandeur; insomuch that in Abraham's time, and vastly more in that of Moses, it had greatly distanced the kingdoms on the Tigris, which rose not to any commanding power, till several centuries later. But as this people rapidly advanced to political greatness, and spread the monuments of its might and enterprise, in cities, and temples, and pyramids, the remains of which continue to this day; so it proceeded with the like rapidity in a far different and a fatal career, that of apostasy from the true knowledge of God, and the creation to itself of objects of worship innumerable, in place of the adoration and service of the true God.

Idolatry speedily reached in Egypt a gigantic climax, which was but faintly represented and embodied, so to speak, in the vastness of the temples and sculptured forms, which rose over the land from Memphis to Syene. It is probable, as has been formerly remarked, that such works, connected with idol worship, had been commenced long before the visit of Abraham, and that in the time of Moses, some of the greatest of these colossal monuments had been completed. It is true, no mention of such

monuments is made in the early Scriptures ; but neither is there any reference to them in the later Scripture allusions to Egypt, when we must be certain that they existed. No inference against their antiquity can, therefore, be drawn from the silence of Moses ; while on independent ground, the evidence of their antiquity is so indisputable, that we cannot doubt, that some of the pyramids and temples, which are to be seen now, met the wondering gaze of the youth who, brought up in Pharaoh's court at Memphis, was afterwards to become the leader of Israel forth from Egypt. We are at a certainty, that, at least, there were such temples then reared for idol worship, and that idolatry had become so multiplied in its objects, and so intense and debased in its character, as to have been surpassed by the infatuations of no after age. Almost every visible object in nature, almost every living thing in the waters, and on the dry land, had become, by the reckless sorcery of a sensual imagination—driven on, assuredly, by the influences of Satanic agency—representative of a divinity to be adored and served. Here first, then, in the second history of our world, the great apostasy became visibly a system of strength and awful domination ; and here, on the Nile, idolatry, gorgeous in its temples, shrines, and service, and absolute in its hold on the mind of the people, was to meet with its first rebuke and disaster, though these availed not for its final overthrow.

The question directly and principally brought into issue, in the demand of Moses for the liberation of the children of Israel, was, Who should be regarded as the true God—whether the One Infinite Supreme, or the pretended gods of idolatry. The constant reply of Pharaoh was, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?" The result was the infliction of judgment after judgment, each manifestly preternatural, and each a proof of the truth proclaimed by Moses, that the God of Israel was alone God. All the resources of craft and priestly machination were brought forward in vain, against the proofs of the Divine unity and rule thus given, and each proof given in a form of heavier rebuke and disaster to idol-worship and its votaries. The Nile which they adored was turned to blood, and its fish perished. Reptiles covered the land and filled their chambers ; vermin reached their persons. The cattle of the Egyptians, including the creatures they had chosen as gods, were at a stroke destroyed ; the goat worshipped at Mendes, the ram

at Thebes, and the bull Apis, their chief animal deity. The dust of their brick-kilns spread the plague of boils on their flesh. The tempest followed, which in thunder, hail, and fire that ran upon the ground, devastated the crops of their early harvest; and what the tempest had spared, the succeeding visitation of locusts consumed, till of flax, or barley, or rye, or wheat, no vestige was left. The obduracy of despotism was still unrelenting; the infatuation of idolatry unconvinced. If the myriad objects worshipped on the earth's surface had perished, the grandest object in the heavens remained, to which idolatry might still direct its reverence, hope, and prayer! But, behold, the sun himself is blotted out of view, and a darkness that might be felt overspreads the land, such that none dared move, or attempt the meanest labour. How utter is the catastrophe thus accomplished upon the whole system of the sensible forms consecrated in the false religion of antiquity! and what a proof, had men been amenable, not merely to reflection, but to the open teachings of preternatural power, was thus given, on the most public theatre of the old world, of the falsehood of the general human belief, by which mankind had sunk from the recognition of the One Infinite Maker of all things, into the worship of the sun and moon, and four-footed and creeping things on the earth!

But the obstinacy of the depraved heart still maintained the conflict, equally against overwhelming evidence and manifold calamity, in Pharaoh and his courtiers; till at length the messenger of death visits their dwellings, and the firstborn in every single house, from the king's palace to the serf's mud cottage, lies in the cold aspect of death. After this, the leader of Israel conducts the toil-worn thousands of his people forth from Egypt unresisted, and brings them by Divine command to the defiles which bordered on the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his chieftains learn the direction taken, and see its fatal error. The servant of the God of Israel hath misled the people; and in the Red Sea, the whole sum of recent disasters shall be avenged, and their whole import and argument, as against idolatry, reversed! Let the charioteer and the horseman array themselves for pursuit and battle quickly; the vengeance of insulted sovereignty, of bereaved parents, and above all of the baffled priesthood, shall be sated, in the inevitable destruction of the misguided host, now terror-stricken in the desert, unarmed, helpless, a mere

multitude of men, women, and children. In this conviction and spirit the armies of Egypt follow, and we need not depict the issue. The crisis, to every eye but that of faith, deepens, and the peril is imminent and inevitable. And at this time faith held its ground in probably one heart alone—in him who obeyed in every movement the command of Jehovah. That command at last bids him conduct the people still forwards, and to stretch his rod over the waters of the sea before him. These waters part, and open their midway channel to the thousands of Israel; and the last of them has stepped on the safe bank of the further shore, when the pursuing host of Egypt, already advanced in their desperate eagerness into the depth of the miraculous way, walled by the suspended waters, are by those waters suddenly whelmed in a tempestuous sea. On the morrow, the wreck of the chariots of Egypt was seen to float on the deep; and the song of the delivered ones for the first time breaks forth, over the waters, in unutterable thanksgiving to the God of their fathers, and in exulting and triumph over their oppressors.

Thus was the contest ended. Thus was idolatry in early antiquity, met, and confuted, in all its pretensions, and its pride and power in Egypt, for a time at least, overthrown. Nor let it be supposed, that we give undue prominence and significance, in this view, to the great events referred to. Familiar with the narrative of these supernatural interpositions in the sacred Scriptures, we are too apt to confine their bearing to their immediate design and consequence, in the deliverance and history of the oppressed race of Israel. But assuredly they have also their wider meaning, in their import as the evidences of theism, and as a disproof of all false systems, produced on the world's most open stage in antiquity, assailing and humbling idolatry in the very centre of its dominion, and amid the mightiest monuments of its grandeur. This is their fair import in ancient history; and this was the light in which they were for a time regarded by the surrounding nations. For the fame of Egypt's calamities and disasters, and of the migration of the Hebrew nation from Egypt, spread rapidly far and wide; and the event was always identified with the interposition of the God of Israel. Hence, for a time, a spirit of dread fell upon the nations of Canaan, which only the delay of Israel in the wilderness per-

mitted to subside. Considered in a still wider bearing, we add, that, if it be only admitted that such interpositions took place, then they stand forth in history as the ancient grand demonstration of true religion, given in the most distinct and impressive manner, and in circumstances of the widest publicity, for a testimony to all the nations upon the earth. Thus Egypt, in the first period of Hebrew history, became involved, retributively, in the system of supernatural interpositions; and we shall find the same collateral bearing of such interpositions, exerted against other nations, in the succeeding fortunes of the now emancipated Israelites.

In reference to Egypt, the times succeeding the exodus of the Hebrews, and the whole intervening period, from that memorable event to the culminating age of the Hebrew monarchy in Solomon's reign;—this whole space, as we have already remarked, in Egyptian history, is passed over in the Scripture narrative without the least allusion; on which account we may infer, that however Egypt may have regained her strength in this interval, and even become more flourishing in her internal resources, the political power of the kingdom was not such as to enable it to interfere with effect in the affairs of surrounding nations. It is most probable, that the heavy judgments which desolated the land, and the destruction of the Egyptian army, left the kingdom for some time in disorder and feebleness. From general tradition we learn, that after a time a monarch arose in the person of Mœris, whose energy and prudence in directing his reign to works of national utility, raised the kingdom of the Nile to more than its former grandeur; while its prosperity consisted still in the rapid development and increase of its internal resources. After Mœris, followed, as is conjectured by most authorities, the reign of the far-famed conqueror Sesostris; and then of other monarchs already referred to in a preceding page.

In Solomon's reign, Egypt reappears, though but slightly, in the track of Scripture allusion. The marriage of that monarch with one of Pharaoh's daughters, and the implied alliance with Egypt, are facts which announce its power, and coming prominence into the rivalry and conflict of nations. In Rehoboam's time this prominence is attained; and we see Shishak advance his armies to Palestine, and interfere in the affairs of its kingdoms, even

before Assyria; which kingdom also, in the same interval, had risen to greatness, and to extensive empire. From the time of Shishak, 990 B.C., to the reign Pharaoh Hophra, 597 B.C., there ensue about four centuries of still growing prosperity in the history of Egypt. This period, in Jewish history, exhibits the succession of reigns from near Solomon's death to the Babylonish captivity. In the latter, we have the intermixture of apostasy and fidelity, and of correspondent adverse and prosperous times; during which, the kingdom of Judah, surviving the extinction of the separate kingdom of Israel, maintained with less or more of successful struggle, her independence, which was continually menaced, on the one hand by Assyria and then Babylon, and on the other, by the advancing greatness of Egypt. This wide interval of steady progress in the resources and power of Egypt, exhibits the era of its highest prosperity and grandeur, under the ancient Mizraimite dynasty, and the undisturbed independence and rule of the Mizraimite race. The great names of Sethon, Pharaoh Necho, and Apries or Pharaoh Hophra, amid many others of lesser note, occur in this period; each of whom inflicted defeat on the armies of the Assyrian empire. Sethon overthrew the forces of Sennacherib, B.C. 713; Pharaoh Necho, in the time of Josiah's reign, B.C. 619, defeated both the king of Judah and the allied forces of Syria at Megiddo, and again captured Carshemish from the king of Babylon. Apries extended the Egyptian conquests along the Phœnician shore as far as Sidon, and even the island of Cyprus, B.C. 597.

These examples of Egyptian conquest, continued from Shishak to Apries, show, amid the vicissitudes of less prominent reigns, the fact, already stated, of the progressive greatness of the Egyptian monarchy and nation, and the fair probability which it offered to men's thoughts, even in the commencement of the sixth century before Christ, and when the great monarch of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, had already entered on his career of conquest, that Egypt might hold her own empire unbroken, and that the possessions of Mizraim on the Nile, inviolate for twenty centuries, would never be profaned by the tread of a foreign enemy. Thus in view of the rapid increase of power in the kingdoms both east and south of Palestine, and while marking the advancing line of conquest from either side, which might seem to portend the coming collision of the first great monarchies of the

ancient world, Assyria and Egypt; a thoughtful observer at Jerusalem, anxious and fearful for the fate of his own country, menaced from both quarters, would have held it quite doubtful, apart from any omens of prophecy, which power would defeat the other, and which should survive to command the east; or whether both might not continue, as heretofore, in nearly balanced array, as distinct and independent empires. He certainly would not, even so late as the first years of the reign of Hophra, and of the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, prognosticate, on merely human grounds, any considerable repulse to Egypt, much less its subjugation by conquest, and the utter, final fall of the nation, as the distinct Mizraimite race, from its power and grandeur, never again through the lapse of ages on ages to lift up its head as a people, but to be stricken down from that time into humiliation, and utter hopeless debasement and servitude. Why should not rather Egypt be the conquering power in the foreseen conflict; why not become, as under Sesostriis, the mistress of the east; or why should not at least the people, whose monarchy was the oldest, and once the mightiest of all, whose labours surpassed those of all lands in gigantic structures, and whose lore was the reputed fount of all the deepest wisdom and learning: why should not this mighty people, to whom the nations of the west looked up with wondering reverence and awe, at least hold its own territory safe and intact, against whatever invader, and perpetuate to distant times its national independence and power, just as its ancient monuments outlive the wear and waste of ages and of empires? We say, there was no symptom, visible to human judgment, amid the still advancing greatness of Egypt from Sesostriis to Hophra, of any reverse to its fortunes, much less of such utter overthrow as should not merely extinguish a dynasty, but prostrate, without dispersing, the very nation itself, and extinguish the very mind of the Mizraim race, and that for ever, in respect of that high independence, which had so long guarded its sequestered and richly cultured and ornamented home

Such would have been the view of the sagest, merely political, calculation, at the beginning of the year 590 B.C. But in Jerusalem there were rife and public, and familiar at least to the devout part of its inhabitants, intimations, which prognosticated differently respecting the future fate of Egypt. And here we come to the *second* marked era, of the connexion of Egyptian story with the

records of revelation, and the more peculiar interpositions of Divine Providence. It had been decreed by Providence, which determines the date and duration of empires, respecting Egypt,—in retribution for its pride and baseness, as the most abandoned in its idolatries, and the haughtiest in its pretensions to wisdom; in retribution for its abuse of such ancient traditions of higher truth, as it at once retained for priestly reverence, and reserved from popular knowledge; in remembrance too of ancient wrongs inflicted on Israel's race, and as fulfilling, in part, words of still remoter date, pronounced on the posterity of Ham;—that the kingdom, the nation of Mizraim, should now fall from its place of pride, and that the race should grovel evermore in debasement and sorrow, ruled over through succeeding ages by the “servants of servants.” And this destiny, so unique in its form, (for the like befel no other nation,) and so contrasted, in Jeremiah's time, to the overshadowing height and impression of Egypt's glory and power, had been foretold by the prophets of the Most High, with more and more definiteness and distinctness; insomuch, that some of the latest efforts of prophecy, through Jeremiah, were directed to the purpose of restraining back the confidence of the Jewish people from being extended to Egypt, and so, of preventing their being involved in its inevitable fall.

The prophet succeeded not in this endeavour. The Jewish prince and chief men, appalled more by the menacing conquests of Babylon, than by the warnings of prophecy, sought to throw themselves on the help of Egypt, which, when the crisis came, utterly failed them, as Hophra's forces became suddenly dismayed at the approach of Nebuchadnezzar's hosts, and retreated in haste to their own land. Jerusalem was captured; but Egypt still seemed safe; and previous to the last attack on Jerusalem, many of the people, in their vain confidence for the land of the pyramids, withdrew thither, and took by force the warning prophet with them. Jeremiah died in that land soon after. But his words fell not to the ground. Before a year was past, the monarch of Babylon had traversed the Desert, and his horses had drunk of the waters of the Nile; the monarchy of Mizraim was fallen; and Apries, the last of the royal race, was strangled in his halls by Amasis his general, whom Nebuchadnezzar now appointed as a tributary king over the earliest founded polity of the ancient world.



Yet is the review of Egyptian history not ended. Although the dynasty of Mizraim had fallen, and the nation was doomed to a perpetual humiliation, so that its remains are now only to be detected in the oppressed thousands of the Coptic race; yet in Egypt itself, as a country, a new and grander spectacle of history opens, after the conquest of Alexander, in the kingdom of the Ptolemies, which ran a career of fame and splendour for three centuries, to near the commencement of the Christian era. And *this* period of Egyptian history illustrates, in a manner as striking as any preceding portion, its relation to the final dispensations of the Supreme Ruler, which were now fast ripening for their fulfilment and manifestation, in the coming of Him who was to be the Desire of all nations.

The conquests of Persia under Cyrus and Darius overthrew the Assyrian empire, now centred in Babylon, under the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, and brought Egypt under *Persian* rule. Its subjugation to Persia was still more fully effected, by Cyrus' son Cambyses, B.C. 529. Two centuries rolled on, of alternate rebellion, resulting in still more oppressive humiliation to the Egyptians; after which, B.C. 331, the Persian monarchy fell before the arms of Alexander, and Alexandria was founded at the mouth of the Nile, and colonized by emigrants from Greece, and other nations; and particularly by large migrations from Judaea. The reign of the Ptolemies followed, in which Greek civilization, the Greek language, Greek literature, and schools of philosophy, were introduced; and, as a consequence, the Jewish colony became a people speaking Greek, and conversant in the forms and philosophy of Greek thought. This singular event, the introduction of Greek literature into Egypt, and its permanent grand result in the rise of a second epoch of Greek speculation in Alexandria, which continued after the spread and prevalence of Christianity in Egypt, and became blended with Christian theology, in the schools of Origen and his successors, must again come before us, both in its cause and manifold consequences, when we review the conquests of the Macedonian empire. For the present, we shall comprise in a few general remarks our review of the Greek kingdom of Egypt, the kingdom of the Ptolemies, which was the last monarchy, anterior to the Christian era, that was involved in the Roman conquests over the east.

The single victory by which Alexander became master of

Egypt, resulted in a more complete revolution, and a more permanent change, in every respect, than there had been any example of, in all former ages of the world. There was not only the introduction of a new ruling power, but a new people possessed themselves of much of the wealth, and all the military and municipal direction of Egypt. After the Macedonian conquest, and the accession of Ptolemy Lagus when his master died, there is no longer seen in Egypt any native kingdom, nor even the retention, by the native race, of any power whatever. The population doubtless remained, weakened in numbers, and spread through the cities of the Nile; but the nation, as a people with any recognition of power or position, never after appears. The Egyptians were universally humbled into serfs, toiling in the culture of the lands, or in the marble quarries, or in other national works; sunk, in fact, into a condition approaching to that which the Hebrew bondslaves had endured, at the hands of their ancestors, in a far gone age; with this difference, that for the Egyptian race no deliverance was appointed, no hope of resurrection was given; but they have continued, from that time till now, trampled on, as previously by the Assyrian, and next, the Persian invader, so, after that, in more permanent oppression, by the Greek and Roman conqueror, and then in after centuries, by the Saracen, the Turk, and the Mameluke.

To revert to the Greek conquest, and the establishment of the Greek kingdom of the Ptolemies, we may remark, that as the Greek conquerors assumed Egypt as a sort of possession, so there was a large influx of Greek population, besides the military Greek force, drawn into Egypt, both from Greece proper, and from all the Greek states of Asia Minor, and the Ægean Isles. The army was chiefly Greek, and the whole administration, down to the lowest officer, was distributed among Greeks, or at least, among foreigners, who spoke the Greek tongue. In every principal city, from Alexandria to Thebes, Greek governors and prefects ruled, and Greek families assumed, not only the political authority, but an exclusive and haughty superiority socially, which left the humiliated captive race nothing but to serve and pine in despair. Not that the Egyptians were, by this influx and ascendancy of foreigners, outnumbered, or expelled from their home. They remained a population probably twentyfold the number of the foreigners, who had become their masters; but

they ceased to have any vestige of power, or influence; and the monarchy of Egypt, though ruling over some millions of Egyptians, was essentially a monarchy of the Greek race, on the soil of Mizraim's descendants. These remarks are necessary, in order to draw the reader's attention to the fact, which has been rarely adverted to, of the completely distinct character of the new kingdom of Egypt, from the dynasties of all its preceding history; and, that the conquests of Alexander established, and made permanent, the dominion of Greek civilization over all the country of the Nile. Alexandria was in a manner wholly a Greek city, occupied by Grecian families, and some colonists from other foreign lands; and in it the Greek language was for the most part spoken. In the more ancient cities up the Nile, Greek was the language of its rulers and foreign colonizing families, together with its occupying military force.

Thus the depressed Egyptian race remained, scattered over the villages, and doomed to hopeless subjection. Their mighty cities, temples, and pyramids remained to attest their ancient grandeur and skill; but the foreigner ruled in their palaces, and extorted the chief of the soil's produce; and the language of the foreigner was the language of the army, of the court, of the divan of justice, and of all the schools of instruction. So complete from this time, B.C. 323, is the vanishing away of the Egyptian element, so to speak, in the history of Egypt, and the prevalence of the Greek, in language, in literature, and in social culture, as well as political and military administration.

The era of the Ptolemies in Egypt is a very brilliant one, compared with that of most of the contemporary kingdoms. It lasted for near three centuries, from Ptolemy Lagus, to Cleopatra, the last of the Egyptian sovereigns. The power of Egypt became, in this period, at least equal to what it had ever been; the Ptolemies having reduced Palestine under their sway, and, in spite of frequent contests with the Syrian monarchs of Antioch, having retained their hold on this picturesque and fertile province. Hence Judea may be regarded, in general throughout the whole period, from the death of Alexander to the conquests of Pompey, B.C. 70, as a province of the Egyptian monarchy, or at least, as in a degree subject to the rule of the Ptolemies. This rule, however, involved little more than the payment of moderate tribute to the monarch of Egypt, without any imme-

diate and general subjection to foreign administration. There was no resident ruler, nor occupying army, as afterwards under the Romans; nor a widely distributed order of foreign taxgatherers. The administration was held, for greater part of the time, by members of the family of the high priest Simon the Just; and through the whole period, by a Jew, and, under him, by Jewish officials. Neither, in Egypt itself, in their treatment of the native race, is there ground for thinking, that the rule of the Ptolemies was severely oppressive. The Greeks in fact were not a stern or cruel race, such as the Romans evinced themselves, when they succeeded to empire. They loved indulgence, repose, and the occupations of thought, for themselves; and they were not slow to commiserate the lot of the unhappy. In war, they bore not themselves with the same unrelenting ferocity towards the conquered, as the Romans did towards the Carthaginians; in peace, they had no taste for the gladiatorial barbarities which delighted the inhabitants of Rome.

It is possible, that the treatment of the natives of Egypt by the Greeks may have been severe; though there is no evidence of this, beyond the fact that they retained no share of power, and in a word disappear from history. It is certain, that the general rule of the Ptolemies over Palestine, after the first capture of Jerusalem, was remarkably liberal and mild; and that the Jews gladly acquiesced in the sovereignty of the Egyptian monarchy, as a shelter from the oppressive demands and persecutions of the monarchs of Antioch. Moreover, the Ptolemies permitted the freest toleration of worship in their dominions; whence it came to pass, that not only in Palestine were the Jews left unmolested in the exercise of their religious services, but even in Alexandria, the Jewish colony enjoyed the fullest liberty of worship. This colony greatly flourished and multiplied, and in the course of one or two generations the language of the mother country was disused, and Greek became the spoken tongue of the Hebrews in Egypt. They built there a temple for worship, though they forebore any attempt to sacrifice; which observance was restricted to the temple of Jerusalem alone.

This change of language led, under the express encouragement of the Ptolemies, to one of the most important results that can be named, in the history of the ancient oracles of revelation; being no other, than their interpretation and published version, in the

language of the Greeks. This was the first event of the kind, in the history of the inspired record. The reader is familiar with the general account given, of the occasion and manner in which this undertaking of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament Scriptures was accomplished.

Without accepting implicitly each circumstance in the statement of Josephus, as to the number of the translators, their producing, each in a separate cell or chamber, his version of the same portions successively, and that these several and independent renderings turned out, in each instance, coincident and identical; there is enough to awaken our deepest interest, and gratitude to Providence, in the general fact that such a version was effected at Alexandria, under the Ptolemies, by nearly seventy of the devoutest, and most competent Jewish sages; men equally skilled in the command of the Hebrew and Greek tongues, and supremely solicitous, as their noble version itself proves, to represent faithfully, in Greek, the meaning of each word and particle of the Hebrew oracles. This great undertaking was completed about the year 178 B.C.; and thus an event most momentous to the preservation, the integrity, and the historic evidence, of the Old Testament Scriptures, took place nearly two centuries before the Christian era. This was a remote, but strictly dependent result of the Macedonian conquests in Asia; and it was now fulfilled in Egypt in the period of the Grecian rule, and by the liberal and munificent encouragement of Ptolemy Philadelphus and his successor.

It would be difficult to represent, in adequate terms, the momentousness of this event, in connexion with the integrity, and attestations of the sacred oracles. It was the first of the kind, since inspired communications were given to the chosen race of Israel. It broke down the wall of partition, which had guarded the mysteries of revelation from the access of other nations. It divulged these inspired communications, without reserve or partiality, in the language which was understood and spoken, from Sicily to Asia Minor, and now from Asia Minor to Alexandria; the language of philosophy, of eloquence, of poetry, of commerce, of civilization. In this language of Greece, which was then becoming the language of intelligence in all western Europe, as well as in Asia, the whole of the communications vouchsafed by the Infinite Deity to man, were now ren-

dered public and intelligible. By this promulgation, the strict reserve of ages terminated, and a gradually widening publicity of revealed truth commenced; so far at least, as to reach the cognisance of the curious and speculative in the Greek schools of Alexandria, now flourishing under the Ptolemies. Moreover, by this event, the strict custody of the Divine oracles fell out of the exclusive possession of the Jewish people, and their whole series, embodied in a language so widely known, were stamped as in a public tablet, so as, from this date, to render impossible any change on their amount or meanings, whether through accidental error, or any attempt at wilful perversion, of the very thought of which, however, the Jewish priesthood must be considered guiltless. This version of the Seventy, further, establishes for us the existence of the Hebrew Scriptures, as *then* ancient national records, at such period of two centuries anterior to the Christian era; and presents the first step of the historical evidence of ancient revelation, by which its antiquity is to be traced back to the ages respectively of its successive portions; to that of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi; to the prophetic age before the captivity; to the times of the united monarchy of Israel, and thence upward, to the age of the beginning of its national history, and of the commencing period of its sacred records.

The Greek monarchy of Egypt was continued in the dynasty of the Ptolemies, from its formation by Ptolemy Lagus, Alexander's bravest general, about 323 B.C., to its extinction at the death of Cleopatra, B.C. 30. It thus lasted near three centuries, and formed a magnificent close, though in the ascendancy of a foreign people, to the history of Egypt, as an independent kingdom; for after this time, Egypt, like many other mighty states, fell into the rank of a mere province in the great Roman empire. The sovereigns of Egypt, in this period, became, none of them, very distinguished, after the three first; Ptolemy Lagus or Soter, Ptolemy Philadelphus, and Ptolemy Euergetes. Their chief and ever-renewed national contest lay with the sovereigns of Antioch, where, under Selucus, was founded another of the four kingdoms, into which the Macedonian empire was parted after the death of Alexander; and the chief prize, and battle ground, of those campaigns between Egypt and Syria, was Palestine; which thus lay constantly

exposed to the contingencies of war, sometimes swept over by the armies of Syria, but connected politically, for the most part, with the Egyptian monarchy. The whole succession of the Ptolemies, in the long period named, from Ptolemy Lagus to Cleopatra, is about twelve; without reckoning the briefer and more insignificant reigns which fill up some intervals. With the reign of the dissolute Cleopatra, the story of Egypt's magnificence as a monarchy ended; but not its prosperity as a province of Greek civilization. It continued essentially a Greek province, subject to the Roman empire, till the seventh century of the Christian era, when the fierce tornado of Saracen conquest swept over it, and whelmed, in one common ruin, almost every vestige of Greek culture, and of Christian evangelization.

Before we close our notice of the Grecian monarchy of Egypt under the Ptolemies, we must guard the reader against any impression, as if the introduction of Greek civilization in any way mitigated the idolatry so awfully dominant, as we have seen, in Egypt, from the remotest antiquity. When we try to think of the introduction of the language, literature, and philosophy of Greece into a country degraded as Egypt had become, as to the ignorance and barbarity of its native race, the imagination is eager at once to picture a scene of grand *moral*, as well as intellectual transformation, as the inevitable result of such new elements, diffused through the length and breadth of the land. We are apt to think, that Greek culture necessarily inferred moral elevation, and that, if it did so, its prevalence should be such in Egypt, as to pervade the mass of the population, which still consisted, as to its vast majority, of the Egyptian race. We associate with the language and literature of Greece, conceptions of the high intelligence and patient study which are necessary for the acquisition of these *now*; and the thought of a people speaking the language of Plato, by the simplest of all illusions, is apt to suggest the notion of a race of scholars, dissociated from the degradation and ignorance of the uninstructed, dissolute vulgar. But how utterly childish is such a fancy as this! Yet it seems a sort of invincible illusion, from which it requires an effort of the mind to shake itself free. Greek at Athens, was not necessarily knowledge, nor even refinement; any more than the Chinese

language at Canton. To understand or recite the rhapsodies of Homer, imported no higher cultivation, than the knowledge to Englishmen now of our common street-ballads. Herodotus needed not a class of students, to appreciate the recital of his history at Olympia, or at Athens. The *Anabasis* of Xenophon, and even the more thoughtful narrative of Thucydides, were intelligible, as the columns of our daily journals are to us intelligible, or even as a gossip's tale, to the commonest soldier who had served under the younger Cyrus in Asia, or with Nicias in the fatal expedition to Sicily. The mob of Athens were the ultimate judges of the justness of Pericles' arguments, as well as of Cleon's declamations; and they dreamed not, that they needed scholarship and study, for their function, in listening to the first, any more than in clamouring assent to the second. When the matters of discussion ascended to graver speculation, if any of the vulgar should stray to the Porch, the Lyceum, or the Academy, or linger awhile in the group where Socrates was entangling a Sophist in his speech, there was need of more distinct effort of attention and thought, but assuredly nothing answering to the exaggerated notion of difficulty, which the students and commentators of the Platonic philosophy now, would be apt to attach to such privilege, of following the discursive, animated talk of the Athenian sage.

These remarks are obvious enough; yet they seem necessary in order to dissipate the constantly recurring illusion, which identifies the native use of the ancient classic languages, or even of the chief part of their literature, with the habits of thought and cultivation necessary for just the same measure of acquaintance with these, or even immeasurably less, to be attained *now* by students of different tongues and a far distant age. Such knowledge involves to the latter, years of seclusion and research; but the Greek type, and the body of Greek literature, bore no aspect of mystery to Greeks assuredly, whether at Athens, Ephesus, or Alexandria.

Let the reader carry with him these illustrations to the question, how far Greek culture may have necessarily wrought improvement in the civilization of Egypt. Undoubtedly it introduced a higher mental cultivation than existed in the mass of the native race; and so far as Greek literature became the study of those who were not of Greek race, or had not been



brought up to speak the language from infancy, this new element imported in a degree the superadded mental activity, demanded for its patient acquisition now. But under the Ptolemies, they were Greeks chiefly, who spoke the Greek language, and studied the Greek authors. Their generals, their officers, governors of cities, merchants, and the great proportion of their troops, were men of Greek race, gathered from all parts of Greece, and Asia Minor. To these, the Greek language, and the general information it contained, were in effect what the Saxon tongue and writings are to Englishmen now. In proportion as study was devoted in the schools of Alexandria to systems of thought, in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, there would, to this extent, be implied a higher intellectual activity. Further, there would be gradually spread to foreign colonists in Egypt, such as the Jews, and to the wealthier part, if any such were left, of the ancient race, the higher kind of speculation, together with a larger mass of the general intelligence of things, which were more familiarly the possession of the genuine Greek race, now holding the rule and sovereignty of Egypt.

But the question returns, how far did this introduction of Greek culture and general civilization affect the character of Egyptian life and thought morally, and even including the foreigners themselves, who introduced such culture? It introduced doubtless much of a more liberal information of the affairs and history of the nations abroad, and it imported a more stirring element of thought, as well as systems of thought, imperfect often and unsound, but yet often beautifully reasoned and developed. Yet this latter effect would reach only the higher and wealthier class. The mass of the people of all races lived on as before; a proportion of them using, with no idea as to its beauty or refinement, the language of Homer and Aristotle; and the darker-hued, toil-worn, race of Ham, speaking the dialect descended to them from an equally remote source, from the confusion of Babel.

Such Greek civilization under the Ptolemies, therefore, must be considered, in the first place, as confined in its extent to Greeks themselves and other foreign colonists; and next, as limited in its character to the acquisition of Greek literature, and the stimulus to intellectual activity and speculation. This was its sole tendency, and this the range of its influence. Its practical

effect on morals went no higher in Egypt, than it had done in Greece, the birth-place of dialectic speculation. And as to its effect on religious belief, this it left, as regards the population generally, in the same state of gross delusion as it found it. For we have now to remark on the fact, that the system of idolatry, which had been reared in Egypt from so remote an antiquity, sustained no diminution of authority, nor check to its influence, on the accession of the Greek race to the place of rule and ascendancy in that country; but on the contrary it gained, in these foreigners, a new and more intellectual class of adherents to its monstrous and foul mythology.

The idolatry of Egypt prospered only the more in the Greek period; and the Ptolemies, while, on the one hand, they liberally encouraged learning and the arts, by whatever people cultivated, and hence had even promoted, what they deemed in some sort the literature of the Jewish colony, by a version of their ancient Scriptures; on the other, they acknowledged the Egyptian mythology as that which was entitled even to a higher reverence than the Grecian, on account of its higher antiquity, and its long possession of spiritual empire, attested by the grandeur and age of its many temples and shrines. Thus down to the very conquests of Rome, and even later, to the commencement of the Christian era, the oldest idolatry of the world went on still increasing its power, and extending its influence to even the conquerors of the Nile, both Greek and Roman. Hence, when the mythology of the Greeks had become in a degree enfeebled and effete, by familiar apprehension and use, amid the increasing development of thought and speculation, in the time of Cicero and Horace; the Egyptian mythology was imported to Rome, and exercised on the doubting, yet miserable suppliants of European shrines, the force and fascination of a new and more awful host of divinities. When Saturn and Jupiter and Pluto had become, to the more thoughtful, mere names, and to the vulgar, little more than names, there were imported in Cicero's time from Egypt, the mysteries of a worship, celebrated to Isis and Serapis and other names, which gained many proselytes at Rome among the rich and noble, as well as among the populace at large. Hence, in fact, the gigantic idol system of the race of Mizraim rose in dignity and veneration, through the whole period of Greek rule in Egypt; and long after, during the Roman con-

quest, it enslaved to its mysteries the very conquerors of the native population, and cast a shadow even over the mythology of Europe, and paled its lustre.

During no period was this system more dominant, than during the reigns of the Ptolemies. Many of the very temples, which now remain in Egypt, belong to the Greek period, and were reared by some of the Ptolemies themselves to the worship of the Egyptian divinities; and to this remarkable circumstance is it owing, that the possibility exists of the interpretation of the hieroglyphic monuments of Egypt. On some of these monuments, particularly on the celebrated stone discovered near Rosetta, and now placed in the British Museum, the record of some event connected with the reign of the Greek monarch, happened to be inscribed in the Greek character, as well as in the Sacred character used by the priesthood, and also the Demotic character, or the language of the common people in ancient Egypt. The triple inscriptions on these monuments, one of them being Greek, suggested the possibility of their import being identical; which supposition was immediately confirmed by the fact, that for every mention of the names of Greek monarchs, there were found occurring at like intervals Egyptian characters perfectly identical, and denoting therefore their meaning and reference to be the same, as giving in the Sacred and Demotic dialects, the same names as in the Greek. This discovery furnished the clue and key to other interpretations, by fixing on any Greek word of importance, and after marking the places and intervals of its recurrence, identifying these with words of the like figure, in the two other dialects, at nearly the like intervals with the Greek names. We need not allude further to this subject; and we have only been led to refer to it, as a circumstance connected with, and illustrating the perpetuity of Egyptian idolatry through all the period of Greek rule, in the erection of temples by the Ptolemies in honour of the Egyptian divinities, and the consequent intermixture of Greek inscriptions with those of the more ancient languages of Egypt.

We now bring to a close our review of the history of the oldest of the monarchies of the ancient world. We have remarked on its origin, its general character anterior to the sojourn of the Israelites, and after their exodus, and its last period of power and empire, from the age of Solomon to its fall, by the arms of

Nebuchadnezzar; and further the centuries of its existence as a monarchy under the Grecian rule, after the death of Alexander, to the time of the Roman conquest. We have attempted to illustrate its relation to the Divine dispensation, in the rebuke and confutation of idolatry at the central seat of its power in Egypt by the hand of Moses; its relation to the civilization of Europe, in the transmission through this channel of the remains of higher truth, concealed, yet perpetuated, by the priesthood from age to age, and communicated to the earlier Greek philosophers of Asia Minor and Greece; and again, the proof given in Egyptian history, in the defeat and fall of their native dynasty, and the perpetual abasement of the native race, of the truth of Scripture prophecy. Finally, by the accession of Greek rule over Egypt, and the circumstance of a Jewish colony having become used to the Greek language and literature;—the necessity thence resulting for a Greek version of the Old Testament, and the fact of such a version nearly 200 years before Christ;—in this result has been shown, how the publicity, preservation, and even attestation of the ancient Scriptures, were thus providentially secured, and a preparation laid for the publication and spread of the records of the coming New Dispensation, in a language now familiar to Jews, Greeks, and Romans, and fitted to be the universal medium of thought amongst the nations of the civilized world. All of this result, in the collision with ancient idolatry, in the illustration of prophecy, and in the preservation of the oracles of ancient revelation, is identified with the story of the kingdom on the Nile.

Such was the course of Egyptian history down to the period of the Roman conquests, or rather to the time of the promulgation of Christianity. When the latter great event took place, when in fulfilment of our Lord's commission, his apostles and their companions went forth into all lands, to testify the gospel of salvation, the message of hope and mercy from the one true God, to the benighted nations which had so corrupted their way by their idolatrous imaginations; Egypt, the seat of the most ancient systems of idolatry, was among the first to receive the Divine communications, which like dazzling sunbeams dissipated the whole mass of shadowy imaginations, that like mists had gathered over the human mind, and left no memorial of them, except in the temples of their former worship.

Nothing is more wonderful in the history of the early propagation of Christianity, than the rapidity and completeness of its conquests in the land of Mizraim's race, where near eighteen centuries before, the blasting succession of plagues and calamities had produced but a momentary suspension of confidence in the false deities of their worship. But so it was. The revelation now given forth, in the testimony of the mission of the Son of God, of him who was God manifest in the flesh, in the story of his life, his teachings, miracles, his death for mankind, his resurrection and ascension, and the proclamation of pardon and life eternal in his name, and through his redeeming blood;—this supernatural communication from the God of Abraham, and of Israel, by his Son, to all mankind, spread through Egypt with a wild and wondrous rapidity, like the fire of old that ran upon the ground, but with a more benignant influence, and was received with an eager welcome and gladness, not only by Jewish colonists, but by the Greeks and by the ancient native race in Egypt, at Alexandria, at Cyrene and Barca; while it was hailed with equal delight by ancient races at Memphis and Abydos on the Nile; and thence spread on to Lybia, Nubia, and Abyssinia.

How wonderful an event was this, when considered in the face of all the preceding dominance, perpetuity, and grandeur of idolatry in Egypt, and in the face of the slow progress of missions now! We have been contemplating, through the long periods of the history of Egypt, from its first remote dynasties downward to the Christian era, the growing intensity and strength of one dark, revolting order of things, in the religious apprehensions and practices of its inhabitants; a system of idolatrous belief and worship, only enlarging with the progress of ages, and casting its roots wider and more deep; not unsettled, nor broken up, by the plagues which destroyed its imagined gods, and punished the vain trust in them; not diminished in its authority over men's minds, by the access of Greek intelligence and philosophy, but in a manner entangling these, in a subjection to a new and baser mythology; an idolatry so rife and infatuating, as to obtain for itself innumerable proselytes in the very capital of the world's empire, and the meridian of the Augustan age. How unexpected at such a moment, and in such a crisis of the world's history, was the rapid and entire extinction and disappearance of this very system, and the introduction of a faith so

new, so opposite to man's prejudices, pride, and self-indulgence, in this great ancient stronghold of idolatry ! Yet this was the change which soon followed, after the first proclamation of the gospel in Alexandria, first in its Jewish synagogues, in accordance with the invariable apostolic practice, and then in the market-places and streets of the city. Upwards through the towns and villages on the Nile, the messengers of the cross pushed their course, and though often resisted, doubtless, and persecuted as elsewhere, yet in every city successful, their message listened to by wondering thousands, and by numbers in each place believed ; so that where the pyramids rose, where marble temples bore the impress of thousands of years, where mighty remains of ancient Egypt's grandeur stood unfallen and awful, amid these monuments of the past, a new religion spread, a new worship was observed, and the praises of God and the Lamb resounded. After no great number of years, probably before the end of the first century, Christian churches existed in all parts of the Nile valley, as well as beyond the Cataracts, in Ethiopia and Abyssinia. Before the end of the second century, we have Christian schools of theology in Alexandria, headed by Origen, Dionysius, and Clement ; and perhaps, in one and a half century more, we should have to look in vain through all the extent of the Nile, for a single worshipper of Isis and Serapis.

How wonderful a triumph we repeat is this, in the spread of Christianity, viewed simply as we have been led to view it, as a historical change, which passed over that land of the shadow of death ! It is well known, that nowhere did Christianity achieve a more complete triumph, and that its conquests endured more than six centuries, till, as a judgment on the general declension of vital piety in the east, the rise of the Saracen power was permitted, which devastated the whole of Northern Africa from the Nile to Mauritania. Other political changes succeeded in the Mohammedan kingdom of Egypt ; the Caliphate of the Fatimites ; the Ottoman conquests ; the Mamelukes' independent sovereignty, and again its reduction to the allegiance of the Porte ; all of them foreign dominations over the oppressed remains of the ancient native population ; but the fact of greatest interest, regarding this *native population* is, that it continued through all ages of suffering, faithful in its allegiance to the Cross, and that, this very day, this Coptic people, numbering about 160,000, the

remnant of the once mighty masters of the Nile, are still in external profession, *Christians*, and like the Abyssinians, avow their unwavering faith in Jesus of Nazareth.

Recurring for a moment to the period and origin of so unexpected, so astonishing a change in the central abode of idolatry, we may fitly ask, what power could have caused it, but that Divine Spirit, which wrought with the apostles of the cross in signs and wonders, and which made the foolishness of preaching mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan? Egypt had, after this period, as we have said, a Christian history, of 600 years, while it continued a province of the Roman empire, and latterly of the eastern empire of Constantinople. Her history is illustrated by a succession of the most eminent names in theology, and in the later Platonic philosophy. It gives us the schools of Origen, and of Ammonius; and later, the eminent names of Cyril and Athanasius; while in Upper Egypt, we hear of the retreats of the Anchorites or (according to some) Therapeutæ, whose cells afforded Athanasius an unfailing asylum from the pursuit of the emissaries of Constantius. All this picture of a moral change, so strangely in contrast with the intense moral gloom and infatuation exhibited for twenty centuries, anterior to the Christian era, was the simple result, aided by the Divine power, of the proclamation of the gospel of Christ.

We are unwilling to quit the banks of the Nile, without a glance at the wonders of ancient art and labour, remains of still vaster structures, which bestrew its valley for a course of 700 miles from the Cataracts down to the Bay of Aboukir. These remains are vastly more numerous than those of any other country, if perhaps we except Hindustan; and they exceed in magnitude, and a rude scale of grandeur, those of every country on the face of the earth. The remains of Nineveh were for ages buried in a vast mound, and such of them as have been laid open to view, while exhibiting much that is curious as specimens of eastern art, have not that colossal magnitude, nor general grandeur of design and expression, which overawes the beholder in the plains of the pyramids near Cairo, or amid the columns of Luxor and Thebes.

Of Babylon again, the vestiges even of its existence, and situation, are some vast mounds, or remnants of towers, and those of doubtful antiquity: so completely has the desolation

foredoomed by prophecy stamped its lasting impress on the land of Chaldea. But it is not so in Egypt. Grand and awful remains of the Old World, such as the first generations after the Flood rendered it, exist still in the Nile valley, and appeal with touching solemnity to the beholder's eye now, as they did to the thoughts of Herodotus and Plato twenty-five centuries ago, as the representation and image of a far remote age. It is to be remarked, moreover, respecting the monuments of Egyptian antiquity, that they are identified, in great part, with the idolatrous religion of these early apostates from the true knowledge of God ; and thus have survived, for ages, the extinction of the false systems which prompted their erection. This may be said no less of Grecian and Roman temples, and the statues of their ancient mythology ; only that these are but scant remains, compared with the vast piles which are to be met with on either shore, in the upward voyage on the Nile. There are in Egypt, the remains of grand works of national utility, in its canals, and the ruins of its vast cities ; but the most striking and enduring of its monuments, are its pyramids, its gigantic statues, its temple columns and porches ; all of them, more or less, the creations of idolatrous belief. So that in great degree, as we have remarked, the monumental antiquities of the land of Mizraim, exhibit, as a whole, the shrine of those false and impious imaginations which were for ever dissipated in Egypt near two thousand years ago by the light of Christianity. Such is the *general* account to be given of Egyptian monuments ; though doubtless many are mere works of art, and are to be contemplated chiefly, in their association with ancient ingenuity and invention.

It would be impossible, in the brief space to which we are limited, to give any graphic detail of the remains of Egyptian art. We shall confine ourselves to such summary representations, as may give a general conception of their character and extent ; referring the reader, for fuller description, to the many works extant on these antiquities. If we imagine ourselves arrived, in Upper Egypt, at the boundary which separates it on the south from Nubia, we can thence mark, in downward course with the stream, the chief of the memorable objects on either side, which meet us in our descent. Near that boundary are the Cataracts of the Nile, where its flood pours into the valley of Egypt ; and at a short distance below, the islands of Philæ and



Elephantine are situate, and the city of Syene, where the granite masses were quarried which furnished the material of its temples and statues. Philæ, which is only 900 yards in circuit, is covered with ruined temples of white sandstone; one of them a temple dedicated to Osiris, and covered with hieroglyphics, with a double inscription on the column, marking its erection by Ptolemy Philadelphus. Elephantine contains remains of edifices reared by Mœris, in the period soon after the exodus of the Israelites, and the wall of an ancient quay, on which the Nilometer was sculptured, a figured scale to compute the rise of the Nile, which was seen by Strabo about B.C. 24. From the quarries of Elephantine, those vast blocks were hewn which were formed into single small temples, called from this circumstance Monolithic temples; and one of the largest of which was reared at Sais in Lower Egypt. The quarrying of such a mass, and its conveyance down the Nile, give proof of the great mechanical resources of the Egyptians, as, in fact, the whole scale of their architecture constantly indicates. The city of Syene, on the right of the Nile, a little below the rock islands just named, was the furthest city of Upper Egypt towards Nubia; and being situate on the Tropic of Cancer, it became celebrated for its gnomons, which cast no shadow at noon in the summer solstice, and was visited for astronomical purposes both by Eratosthenes of Cyrene, and by Strabo. It has also ruins of temples, but these are of the Roman period, in Nerva's reign. Ombos, the next city down the Nile, has two beautiful temples of the Greek period, in high preservation, commenced by Ptolemy Epiphanes about B.C. 180, and completed in the reign of Cleopatra, whose name is to be traced on some of the bas-reliefs. Edfou, thirty-three miles lower down, has the ruins of a temple and quay, also belonging to the time of the Ptolemies. Elkab, the ancient Eilethya, six miles further, contains nothing hitherto discovered of the Greek or Roman periods; nor of earlier epochs, except some fragments of temple inscriptions, probably of the times of the Pharaohs. But it has other remains of supreme interest. These are the celebrated sepulchral caverns, or hypogæa, excavated in an insulated sand-stone hill, near the town; being tombs of celebrated personages, richly decorated with painted bas-reliefs, and bearing distinct inscriptions, now deciphered, which give the period when those persons, whom they commemorate, lived; and which refer to times even as early as the reign of Mœris. These tombs, with the

plain voice of their inscriptions, confront their reader with the very beings, in a manner, who passed their shadowy life at Eleuthya more than 3,000 years ago. In our descent, passing by Ezneh, and Erment, which have vast temples, but of the Roman period, we come to the ruins of the hundred-gated Thebes, or Diospolis, which are scattered over an extent now divided into nine distinct townships. It is impossible to give more than brief references to these. The chief of these are the tomb-caverns, the statue of Memnon, the palace of Luxer, and the temple of Karnac. The catacombs are covered with inscriptions, which celebrate the glories of Rhamses the Great, or Sesostris. At Abydos, a short distance from ancient Thebes, are the remains of a building, in one of whose chambers was discovered, in 1818, a hieroglyphic tablet, with names of ancient dynasties, which seem to correspond with the account of Manetho, and which, if rightly deciphered, would appear to fix the reign of Sesostris about the year 1473 B.C., or in the period next after the exodus. This would not make the age of his conquests inconsistent with the silence of Scripture, as, in this period, the Israelites sojourned in the wilderness. If this date be accepted, then the Shishak of Scripture is not to be confounded with Sesostris.

In what may be called central Egypt, the ancient Heptanomis, there are fewer remains of ruins than in the district around Thebes, and Upper Egypt generally. At Arsinoe, there are colossal pedestals and an obelisk; but from the lower district, towards Memphis, all trace is gone of the celebrated Labyrinth, which Herodotus visited and describes, and which consisted of 3,000 chambers, most curiously connected, 1,500 above ground, and 1,500 below. The pyramid only is left, which was situate at the angle, in which the labyrinth terminated. Of Memphis, the second great capital of Egypt, there remain only ruins, which indicate its site; but near it, the greatest of Egypt's wonders still rear their mighty elevations—the Pyramids, which, as they would seem to have preceded nearly all structures in the era of their formation, so survive the ruin of all, untouched by the hand of time, and destined, in all appearance, to last to the very end of the world. The height of the greatest of these, according to modern computation, is about 480 feet, and the base, each way, 750 feet. Their origin and design are still a mystery; whether designed for astronomical, or for other purposes. The chambers of some have been explored, without resulting, however, in any

discovery. They have no inscriptions or bas-reliefs of any kind, and nothing is left to tell their story, except the notices of successive beholders, as to the fact of their existence and antiquity, in even the first dawn of secular history.

Such is Egypt in the gigantic and innumerable remains of her ancient grandeur, art, and history. Travellers alone, in that country, can adequately feel the impression, which the endless spectacle makes, of the monuments of Mizraim's race on the Nile, whether preserved without decay like the pyramids and the cities of the tombs, or in masses of ruins, columns, and single statues, like those seen at Luxor and Karnac. Amid the specimens of Egyptian remains assembled in the British Museum, in presence of the huge statues, and the granite sarcophagi, the beholder feels as if they were the works of a mightier race of ancient men. But such impression is fully felt only by gazers who walk amid the ruins of Karnac, or who have gone up the Nile to its cataracts, exploring in turn every spot, and marking every ruin. Yet these remains of cities and temples, these pyramids, statues, and tombs, are but *ruins*, and the comparatively scant remains of ancient Egypt's grandeur. What if there could be produced for us in faintest imagination the actual picture of Egypt, as it was to be seen three thousand years ago, near the reputed age of Homer, and as it was, perhaps, seen by Homer himself, before the first reverses of the dynasty of the Pharaohs, or as it actually met the gaze, five centuries later, of Herodotus, who went from city to city, and, with unsated curiosity and wonder, questioned the priests of Memphis and of On, or stood awestruck and silent in the vestibules of their most ancient temples!

It is to be noted, that in reality the single torrent which flows through the valley of Egypt, was the cause of its grandeur and history. Had there been no such stream, or had the Nile been as the Euphrates, with no wide inundations, and charged with no rich sediment, the valley had remained all but a desert, and as uninhabitable, or as partially inhabited, as the desert of Arabia, or the region of the Dead Sea. But the stream, unfed by any fall of rain-drops in Egypt, whose annual inundations spread a rich and magical fertility over the soil, gave that physical character to the valley which attracted and nourished its populations; whilst the granite quarries of Syene, and the sandstone hills of Philæ, supplied the materials of which Egyptian monuments were constructed for perpetuity.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE ASSYRIAN MONARCHY.

Assyria the first of the world's ancient empires—Of such there were four, and not more—Conditions entitling them to this distinction of world-empires—Origin of the Assyrian monarchy in the founding of Nineveh and Babylon—Obscure interval of its history from Nimrod to the time of Jonah—Greatness of Nineveh at this time, proof of long preceding progress—Notice of its successive monarchs, according to ancient tradition—Second epoch of Assyrian greatness from about 800 B.C. to fall of Nineveh 606 B.C.—Scripture references to Assyrian monarchs traced through this period—Predictions of the fall of Nineveh, as of Babylon—Assyrian monarch of Jonah's time—Character of Jonah's mission—Relations of Assyria to Hebrew history—Invasions of Palestine, by Pul B.C. 770, by Tiglath-Pileser B.C. 740, and captivity of the tribes east of the Jordan—by Shalmaneser, B.C. 726, and captivity of remaining tribes of North Palestine—Sennacherib, 714 B.C. expedition against Jerusalem—Esarhaddon, capture of Jerusalem and exile of Manasseh—his penitence and restoration, and fall of Jerusalem postponed—Nebuchodonosor B.C. 658—Sardanapalus B.C. 636, last of the Nineveh monarchs—Nineveh captured and razed to the ground B.C. 606—the Assyrian empire continued in Babylon—Proof of this unity—Nebuchadnezzar's first capture of Jerusalem—and first captives to Babylon, king Jehoiakim, Daniel, Ezekiel, &c.—Second siege and capture B.C. 586, captivity of the whole population—Extended conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, and security of the Assyrian empire—Yet existing predictions of its fall—Influence of the Assyrian empire on the condition of the Hebrew race—Early warnings of captivity given by Moses and Joshua—The remote peril to arise from Assyria—Different sequel given to the two captivities—Improbability of restoration to Judah—Thus dependent on the fall of Assyria—Change wrought on the minds of the captives in Babylon, in their recoil from idolatry—Capture and fall of Babylon.—Nineveh monuments.

HAVING reviewed the course and epochs of Egyptian history, we are now to direct the reader's eye eastward, to that central region near the Tigris, where the first of the *world's* great empires rose, which in succession followed each other, till the era of that wider and more permanent dominion, typified in prophecy as the "stone hewn without hands," which should crush the last and greatest, in its progress and extension. These empires of the ancient world, anterior to Christianity, were the Assyrian, the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman empires. After the last of these had reached the

height of its grandeur and power, and the furthest limit of its extent; in the very interval and calm of its completed conquest over the civilized world, and in the very centre of its vast dominions, arose, like a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, the fifth kingdom, the last and nobler form of empire which was to spread, and to destroy the most terrific secular power based on idolatry, and never be itself destroyed, but to extend its sway over all nations, and last till the heavens shall be no more.

Of such empires, of vast extent, and each of preponderating power in its own age, there were, in the period anterior to Christianity, from the most ancient epoch, downward, Four chief and dominant empires, and not more, which moulded the world's destiny in their succession, of which each earlier one contributed to prepare for the one which followed, and all, in a degree, to prepare, under the controlling destiny of Providence, for the era when Christianity should appear. The conditions entitling any kingdom to this chief rank in ancient history, are ;—that it should be the mightiest of its own time, and be in fact ascendant, so as to give law to surrounding nations; that it should extend its power as far as the circumstances of its own time appear to admit; that it should compact and consolidate its many provinces, and subjugated kingdoms, into some permanent unity, such as shall not afterwards be easily dissipated; and that this consolidated empire should remain to serve as the base, or as a complete mass, for the succeeding combination of political power. These, and other conditions, meet in the four empires we have named, alone of the ancient world, until the era of Christianity; and they have never been realized in any great political power since. There were, before the limit we have mentioned, four monarchies, which, *in relation to the circumstances and possibilities of their age*, were universal monarchies; but since the breaking up of the Roman empire, there has been no universal monarchy, no dominion or control centred in one over the civilized world; no subsisting form of empire even embracing all of Europe; but the fragments only, the toes of the iron foot of Nebuchadnezzar's vision; the broken remnants of a once single sovereignty, which stretched from the Grampian Hills to Mount Atlas, and from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Euphrates.

As it is important, not only to the exact and critical vindication of prophecy, but to the perfect intelligence of the revolutions of

the ancient world—of their precise extent and character in each period—of the bearing of each on the succeeding—and of their gradual extension, till the last reached the assigned limit, and the tide of political empire was from that point to recede, and a new form of dominion to ensue, destined alone for universality ; —we must be permitted to add one or two remarks, further, in this place, in order to make clear to the reader, the position of each of the four empires in its own time, and its claims to be deemed the one ascendant empire of the world in its particular age.

Assyria, in the earliest historical period after the migration and settlement of nations, claims not only the first place, but the rank of the chief ruling monarchy of the world, in the limits, then possible, for such preponderance and extension. We need not insist, that Egypt, though a monarchy equally ancient with that of Nineveh, and though richer in resources and more venerable in grandeur, was yet not entitled to the political pre-eminence, in relation to other nations. There were peculiar circumstances in its position, which prevented its growth into a general empire spreading widely over other lands. And admitting the fact, that the kingdom of Egypt, with all its power and riches, was confined within the territory of the Nile, except in the brief interval of the invasions of Sesostris and of Shishak, it will appear, that no *other* great power besides the Assyrian monarchy existed in Asia, which spread and established its conquests over the nations of the east, in all the ages anterior to the reign of Sarac or Sardanapalus, and the fall of Nineveh in the year B.C. 606. Down to this period, with brief exceptions, Babylon itself was a subject province to Nineveh ; and after the destruction of the last city, the same political empire, in reality, survived for 71 years more in Babylon, with nearly the same territory, and with only a change of dynasty. There was a shifting of the local centre of the monarchy to another capital, where it gained still greater force, till it was broken by the Persian sovereignty.

In all the period named, there was no rival force in Asia ; and during this time, the Assyrian empire, whether identified with Nineveh, or with Babylon, went on extending its rule, and consolidating its conquests in the east. To say nothing of the countries towards the Indus and beyond it, which were only being gradually peopled when the kingdom of Assyria commenced in Nineveh and Babylon, there were on the west,

towards Asia Minor, no mighty kingdom to compete with it; and it is only near the last age of the Nineveh monarchy, in the sixth or seventh century B.C., that we hear of the rise of the small kingdom of Lydia, and the spread of its power gradually on the coast of Asia Minor. It is certain, moreover, that in Europe, no single monarchy arose, which extended over many lands; but that the Pelasgic, or Japhethite tribes, were only slowly gaining concentration and force as small states, in Thrace, in Thessaly, in Greece, in Sicily, and in Italy, whether in Etruria, or Magna Græcia.

Thus Assyria, alone, and for some 1,500 years, continued the single predominant monarchy of the world, whose power was steadily advancing over other nations, and whose rule and conquests were gradually moulding the nations, at the earlier centre of civilization, into unity, fitted to cohere as a mass, in the wider political organization, which next ensued, under Persia. Egypt had vast interior resources and wealth and grandeur; but it had no such principle of extension, nor exercised such force in amalgamating other nations, nor had such ascendant in the world's wider theatre of history, as Assyria maintained. And if it be objected, that Assyria, though the greatest single monarchy of its time, was not a universal monarchy; that its dominion, if preponderant in Asia, extended not beyond, nor even included more than a portion of central Asia itself; we reply, that, at this point, the limit imposed by the state of the world's civilization must be admitted as an adequate explanation. Populations distant from the Asiatic centre were dispersed, and but gradually forming into single smaller tribes or states. Even if Assyria had the requisite force, it could have in these early periods no temptation for wider conquest; none, for example, northward, among the Massagetæ, whither their queen, much later, fatally tempted the ambition of Cyrus; or, again westward, in the wild forests and snows of Thrace or Macedonia, whither Darius advanced only as late as about 500 B.C. It is enough, in order to make evident the place of Assyria as the first great monarchy in its time, that, for its time, it, and it alone, had a wide-spread empire over other nations, and had the predominance, in these periods of the world's history, as far as the circumstances of the world's widening civilization rendered possible; and that no other power, of like ascendancy or predominance, arose, till the second great kingdom, both of prophecy and

of history, appears in sovereignty reared by the elder Cyrus. Moreover, it becomes apparent, in the fact of the vastly wider empire of Cyrus, that Assyria, the first empire, had been a preparation for the wider organization of the second. It had completed the assimilation of the separate nations united under its rule; so that these fell, in one unbroken mass, into the conquests of Persia; and when Babylon fell, the nations it had swayed, gained no separate independence, but, in a mass, became the prize of the conqueror.

By what process, it may be asked, are nations, originally distinct and independent, thus reduced into a political level and unity, so as to lose the power, in great degree, and even possibility, of breaking again upwards into freedom, and asserting their national individuality; and how could Assyria have rendered the nations of the east a different political organization of peoples, for their combined and prepared subjugation by Persia, from what it had found them, for its own slow and gradual acquisition? The story is soon told; though it is, on that account, not the less necessary to be adverted to. The process of the political subjugation of other peoples to a foreign power, is not that of the mere defeat of their armies, or the deposition of their rulers; but it is the extinction, more or less directly and gradually brought about, of their ruling dynasties, and chief families; the substitution of foreign governors, and municipal authorities; the imposition of new regulations and laws; and finally the effect of time, in inuring a people to all these changes, in superinducing oblivion of their former condition, and in assimilating their usages, manners, and allegiance, to acquiescence in the new order of things established. Thus are political revolutions, when they embrace wider organizations of once separate peoples, effected; and a permanent levelling of nations, in a wider mass of unity, is completed.

Such was the revolution effected by Assyria in the east, as preparatory to the wider combinations of Persian conquest. The Persian empire, again, levelled and compacted all of Asia, west of the Indus, for the succession of the Macedonian empire; so that three battles, that of the Granicus, of Issus, and of Arbela, sufficed to win the whole of Asia to the youth who headed the armies of Greece. There remained no separate dynasties, no powerful families, when Darius perished, to dispute the conqueror's claim; and Asia from the Indus to the Nile, as the mass



of a previously amalgamated empire, fell to the conqueror's possession. We may conclude these general remarks, by adding, that, in like manner, the conquests of Alexander, though they subsisted long in a separate form as four monarchies, facilitated the extension of the Roman empire to the east. Rome had to beat, first, Philip of Macedon, then, Mithridates of Pontus, then, Antiochus monarch of Syria, and finally, the last of the Ptolemies; but defeating these, their kingdoms successively fell as masses under Roman rule, and became crushed into one empire by the iron force of the Roman republic.

Enough has been said, to exhibit the fact of the four successive revolutions effected in the empires, of gradually enlarging extent, of Assyria, of Persia, of Macedon, and of Rome; and it has been, we trust, satisfactorily shown, that, as these alone were the ascendant empires of the ancient world, so each was a necessary preparation for the succeeding; and the last widest empire but prepared that levelling and intercommunity of nations, which was necessary for the publicity, and the spread of the Christian faith.

We now turn to review this most ancient of the world's empires, in its early centre and origin; its gradual extension; the chief epochs of its power, and the succession of its more eminent kings; its relation to the Israelites, and influence on their history and fate; its character and doom as represented in prophecy; and finally its general effect as advancing civilization in the east, and preparing the conquests of the succeeding empire of Persia.

The seat of the Assyrian empire was that locality, around and near the confluence of the two great rivers of Central Asia, where the families of mankind had their first home after the Deluge, not far below the region where probability would seem to fix the situation of the Garden of Eden. After the ruinous failure of the attempt to build a tower in Shinar, and the dispersion of various tribes and families to distant settlements, a portion of the families of Shem, and of Ham, lingered in the already cultivated plains around the Tigris and the Euphrates, and there founded cities, which became the basis of a mighty empire, and the ruins of which remain to excite the curiosity and awe of travellers to our own day. The chief of these were Babylon and Nineveh; Babylon being the earlier capital, but becoming soon subject to the kingdom centred in Nineveh, a city built, some years later, higher up on the Tigris. It must be remembered that, politically,

the kingdoms commenced at Babylon and Nineveh are truly one. They existed but for a short space, at their commencement, as separate or independent; afterwards, for nearly the whole period of the Assyrian empire, excepting its last seventy years, the seat of power continued at Nineveh, with the exception of brief intervals of revolt; and throughout the whole age of the Assyrian kingdom, the territory, and the populations comprehended in it, were the same. So that the monarchy of Assyria is the monarchy of Nineveh and Babylon; the former city being for ages the capital, and the latter becoming the seat of government only at the very close of the Assyrian history.

The origin of no ancient kingdom is so positively fixed as to its epoch, and founders, as that of the kingdom of Assyria, in both its chief capitals and provinces of Nineveh and Babylon. The antiquity of the Egyptian monarchy is only a general inference from its existence in Abraham's time, and from ancient traditions and monuments, identifying the cities of the Nile with the descendants of Mizraim. But with regard to the kingdoms on the Tigris, which soon became one, we have the express statements of the sacred history, naming the very first monarch or monarchs, as grandsons, and not in any lower descent, from the patriarch Noah. Nimrod, the founder of Babylon, was the son of Ham; and if the text be read in favour of Asshur having builded Nineveh, then this chief was a contemporary of Nimrod, and a grandson also of Noah, in the line of Shem. If the ordinary reading of the text be taken, and it be assumed that Nimrod also built Nineveh, yet is it certain, that Asshur's families had become settled in that district, and that his name, destined to be identified with empire, had already been assigned to that region.

Thus we have an antiquity positively assigned to the cities of Babylon and Nineveh, and to the commencement of political combination and rule over the tribes on the Tigris and Euphrates, and very soon centered for ages in Nineveh as the capital, which might have been doubted, were it not for the distinct mention of the Scripture narrative. This antiquity given to the beginning of the kingdom of Assyria, carries its origin up to within a few generations of the Deluge; for the grandson of Noah was its first sovereign. Its date may therefore be probably fixed about the year 2200 before Christ; which period is also the epoch of the founding of its two chief cities; and of some other cities

on the Tigris, named by the sacred historian, of which all trace has long vanished. This prodigious ancientness, this proximity to the time of the Deluge, and the very origin of man's second history on the earth, invests the history of these capitals with a deep and overwhelming interest, when we try in imagination to pass upward to the very time, now some 4000 years distant, when the first marking lines were traced, or the first sod broken, for laying their mighty foundations

It is to be remarked, that surprising as might seem this antiquity, the Scripture statement is fully borne out by all other ancient history, and ancient traditions; and by the character of those monuments, which have been discovered, of the capital of Assyria. Such traditions, embodied in history by Ctesias and Diodorus Siculus, are in full coincidence with the Scripture account as regards the ancient beginnings of the Assyrian monarchy; and the very ruins of Nineveh, which were a huge mound, or rather mountain, when Xenophon and the 10,000 Greeks travelled past them, in their retreat northwards B.C. 401, told of an ancient anterior history quite in consonance with the Scripture chronology of its origin. Ctesias, who wrote of the Assyrian and Persian monarchs, was a Greek physician of Cnidus, and went up with the younger Cyrus, in the expedition, to which Xenophon's pen has given an imperishable celebrity; but having been taken prisoner at Cunaxa, he remained in the court of Artaxerxes Memnon, being treated with high distinction, for a period of seventeen years, and there wrote his history, only fragments of which have been preserved in the writings of Photius. The other Greek historian of the affairs of the Assyrian empire, Diodorus, is an author of much later date. He flourished about the year 40 B.C., and founded his narrative on the works of Ctesias and other early writers. We have alluded to these authorities, not only in confirmation, had any been needed, of the ancient epochs of the Assyrian kingdom, but also by way of referring to the chief sources of information, which are extant respecting the growth, progress, and conquests of the Assyrian kingdom, during that long interval of some 1400 years, from the foundation of Nineveh to the times of Jonah, in which we meet with no reference to this monarchy in the historic books of Scripture.

There is much of ancient tradition, and perhaps much of

credible statement, transmitted down from ancient times, and received as the history of Assyria. Of such accounts, what is called profane ancient history, as distinct from sacred, is compiled; and these furnish the materials for the well-known sketch of Rollin, not to mention more recent compilations. But it is of consequence to know, which are the chief primary sources of such ancient traditionary accounts of Assyria; and these are, as we have said, the fragments of Ctesias' works, and the more copious narrative of Diodorus Siculus. There would seem to have been a narrative of Assyrian affairs, composed by Herodotus, a writer still earlier than Ctesias. In his brief notices of Nineveh and Assyria, he refers his readers to some other composition, either already written, or then in his intention to compile. But if written, it has, like many other valuable compositions of antiquity, utterly perished; and we are limited therefore for the most part to the authors previously named.

It is in the traditions committed to writing by these—for even in Ctesias' time (B.C. 400), they were the traditions of a distant and fabulous antiquity—that we have accounts of the ancient celebrated monarchs of Assyria; of Ninus the founder of Nineveh, of Ninyas his son, of his queen Semiramis, who snatched the government from his hands, and became the martial Queen of the East; of the celebrated monarch Belus, either an earlier name given to Nimrod himself, or the monarch mentioned in Scripture under the name of Pul; of Sardanapalus, whether the son of the latter, or the same as Sarac, the last of the Nineveh monarchs, who pushed his conquests to Cilicia, and having built Tarsus and Anchyalus, abandoned himself to indolence and luxury. All these, and some other names of mighty monarchs, figure in Assyrian history, in that period, already referred to, of the silence of the Scripture narrative respecting both the great monarchies of antiquity, that of Assyria, and that of Egypt. Nor are such traditions to be indiscriminately, or in the mass rejected. They must have had doubtless a basis of fact, generally considered. For, inasmuch as the Scripture history authenticates the existence of a kingdom on the Tigris, begun in the age after the Deluge, and again in the age of Jonah at B.C. 900, and, at an interval of 1,300 years from the first reference, introduces this monarchy to view as the formidable power which cast its shadow over the east, we have, clearly indicated, a historic period,

throughout this interval, of continued endurance and growth to the Nineveh empire; and profane history therefore only furnishes to this interval of its certain existence and progress, names of monarchs, and indications of conquest, which would seem necessary to conduct its grandeur forward to that point, in which it fell under the gaze of the prophet of Israel, when the great capital of Asshur had its population of perhaps 700,000 souls, and an extent of three days' journey, from extreme to extreme, within its walls. A monarchy represented by a capital so vast, and constructed of buildings like those, whose massive remains are exposed in our own time, could not have risen, like Jonah's gourd, in a brief age; but its endless streets, 15 miles in extent, its fortifications, of 47 miles circuit, of 200 feet in height, and a breadth for the traversing of three chariots abreast, and its battlements with 3,000 towers—all these, as they met the prophet's eye, told of a foregone history, which must have carried his thoughts back to the times before the patriarchs of his own race

Such then must be our estimate of the general fact of the power of Assyria, during the period of the non-allusion of Scripture, from B.C. 2200, to B.C. 900. It had existed through this period; it had gradually grown in power over the east; and it had attained stability, grandeur, and, for the circumstances of those early times, great extent of territory. Moreover, it is certain, that it must have had a succession of princes in this interval, to carry forward its history, and extension; some of whom must have been men of military genius and valour, as well as of stern will and capacity for administration, and probably bore the very names given us in the accounts of Diodorus and others.

Thus far, the general fact of the antiquity and power of the Assyrian monarchy, as represented in profane history, can be brought fairly under the limits of agreement and proof, furnished by the clear, though widely severed allusions, of the inspired narrative; and the circumstance cannot fail to be interesting to minds devoted to such inquiries, both as affording illustration to the perfect accuracy of Scripture, even in its briefest allusions to other history, and as furnishing from Scripture—itsself a history, in its early books, almost coeval with the chief structures of Nineveh—some general evidence in support of the traditions collected by Otesias or Diodorus. But when, beyond this general

inference of Assyrian antiquity, and gradual advance in the ages contemporary to the patriarchal, and the Mosaic periods of Scripture, and again through that of the judges and kings of Israel, and beyond the coincidence, to this extent, of Scripture and profane history, we attempt to verify the succession of Assyrian monarchs, and the range of their conquests, we meet in profane history much that is conflicting and improbable.

Admitting the early progress and greatness of Assyria in these first periods, that greatness could not have been such as to answer to the representations of Diodorus. It must have been limited by the circumstances of the early times of the world. When population was only multiplying from its no remote source, when it was sparse and struggling with its first difficulties, no extensive empire could be formed, or extensive conquests, if made, long subsist. Besides, the Assyrian power, if tested by one slight allusion of Abraham's history, and again by the subsequent silence of Moses, must have been, for a long period, comparatively limited. In the incursion of the five kings from the east, whose forces the Patriarch and the Hittite princes pursued and routed, the king of Shinar, that is, of Babylon or Assyria, is ranked as one of these kings; or, if the name of Tidal, as the king of nations, be suspected to designate a mightier monarch, and be even, further, deemed to represent Assyria, his whole power, joined to that of his confederates, was that of a chief, whose force sufficed for predatory incursions, but not for territorial conquest. This then is the picture of the Assyrian power in Abraham's time. Nineveh existed; Babylon existed, and other great cities east of the Tigris and in Mesopotamia; and probably these last were all tributary, although having their own chiefs, to Nineveh; but Assyria could not then make the conquests ascribed to Semiramis, though, according to some chronologists, Semiramis had already reigned over the east.

With a view to the completeness of historical summary, with respect to the Assyrian monarchy, we will briefly recite here the traditions furnished by the ancient authors, respecting the long period from the founding of Nineveh to the times of Pul, about 800 B.C., when the Scripture allusions to Assyria recommence, and its authentic information corroborates the remainder of profane history. If we adopt the chronology of Archbishop

Usher, followed in our English Bible, the founding of Babylon by Nimrod, and of Nineveh by the same king, or, according to another reading of the verse in Gen x, by Asshur, may be assigned to about the year 2200 B.C.; and then, the next event connected with these rising eastern kingdoms, the expedition of the five kings of the east against the cities on the Jordan in Abraham's time, is usually fixed about 1915 B.C. Exactness to the very year is, of course, out of the question, in such references; only approximations to the real date must at any time be presumed. Here, at this date in Abraham's history, Scripture allusion to Assyria becomes silent for a period of 1100 years; and it is only about the date 820 B.C., that its notices are resumed in the account of Jonah's prophetic missions. How does profane history fill up this interval, or rather how does it conduct the story of the Assyrian monarchy from its origin to the last date just mentioned? It is in the following manner.

Assigning the founding of Nineveh to Nimrod, or rather to his son Ninus, and at a period answering to the Scripture chronology, it gives to Ninus's reign a rapid extension of conquest, chiefly on the north against the Bactrians, and then makes the reign of Semiramis immediately follow, as that of his queen, who, having deposed and murdered her husband, ruled over Assyria under the name of her son Nynias, and made her reign memorable by conquests over all Asia, and more particularly by the enlargement and fortification of Babylon. Then follow the reigns of Ninyas and Teutamius, the latter of whom is supposed to have sent aid to Priam, in B.C. 1100, which must separate his era from that of Ninyas by a space of some 800 years. Then follows the reign of Belus, supposed to be the Pul of Scripture history, about 820 B.C.; and lastly that of his son Sardanapalus, against whom Belesis (Baladan) of Babylon, and Arbaces of Media, revolted, and whose death, accompanied with the capture and destruction of Nineveh, terminates the first history of the Assyrian kingdom and of its capital. After this period, in the annals of profane history, as also of Scripture, a second epoch of the Assyrian empire commences, from 800 B.C., to 600 B.C., which terminates in the utter fall and ruin of Nineveh, and in the transfer of the seat of the empire to Babylon.

Such is the confused summary of the progress of the Assyrian

empire, to be collected from the ancient traditions given by Herodotus, Ctesias, and Diodorus. These writers merely recorded such traditions as they could get, and the earliest of them was distant some fifteen centuries from the times of the reputed reigns of Semiramis and her son. It is impossible that Nineveh should have risen to so much power in that early age; and the age of Ninus or Semiramis, admitting the reality of their reigns, must be placed much lower down, and not far from about 900 B.C. It will have been remarked also, that for about 1400 years, from Nimrod to Sardanapalus, there are given, in these vague accounts, but some four or five monarchs! Tradition in fact had only caught faint rumours of times preceding Pul, B.C. 800; and Ctesias and others gave of these such representations as they judged best. As we have before remarked, there was a basis of fact, in the account of Assyrian grandeur, as preceding the age of Jonah. In his time Nineveh was the capital of a great kingdom, the ruling monarchy of the east; and for the attaining this point of greatness, there must necessarily have preceded ages of growth, and gradual conquest. There must also have existed chiefs or monarchs of eminent valour and prudence, by whose enterprise such enlargement of empire was attained; and it is no improbability that the names of these may have been rightly transmitted, and that one of these monarchs of ancient Assyria may have been a queen, bearing the name given her in profane history. It is also highly probable that to this obscure age, of the period from Abraham's time about 1900 B.C. to that of Jonah, B.C. 820, may be referred some of those monuments of ancient Nineveh, which have been disinterred in our own day, and many of them brought over to this country. The final fall of Nineveh took place in 606 B.C., about 200 years later; so that it is no violent supposition to make, that these structures, of which we can now gaze on the remains, in huge sculptured masses, were, at the fall of Nineveh, more than 200 years old, which removes their date back to Jonah's time, and with equal probability to centuries still earlier; and that these sculptures, when he walked past them in the long streets of Nineveh, were representative of a remote period very near the times of Asshur and of Nimrod.

It is in this general form of summary, then, that we must



dispose of the more ancient division of the Assyrian history, from Nimrod to Pul. That its existence as a kingdom began so early, and as the steadily advancing monarchy of the east, is certain. The details of its progress and grandeur are involved in impenetrable obscurity. It is only when we meet again with Scripture allusion, that we gain distinct and certain information; and to that information, combined with the subsequent intimations of profane story, we have now to refer, for a brief account of the Assyrian monarchy, within what may be called the properly historic period of its greatness, and terminating with its fall.

This second division of Assyrian history, derived in its earlier portions from the notices of Scripture, dates from Jonah's age, about 820 B.C. to the fall of Nineveh 606 B.C.; and extends, in the Babylonian dynasty and capital—for it is still the Assyrian empire—for a period of seventy years longer, to 538 B.C., when, at the final capture of Babylon, the Assyrian empire was terminated, and the Persian empire of the east commenced under Cyrus. The historic period, then, of Assyrian power, has its two epochs; the first, and vastly the longest, is that identified with the monarchy of Nineveh, where, from ancient times, the seat of empire had continued; and the last and smaller period, is that prolonged in Assyrian rule, after the transfer of power to the other great ancient capital of the empire. For these periods, we have, in the Scriptures, the distinct succession of monarchs, and the chief movements of their reigns, together with the means of determining, conjecturally, the limits of their reigns. Several such notices of Scripture occur in its narrative portions; others and later ones are given in its predictions.

The most remarkable and striking circumstance in relation to such Scripture notices regarding the Assyrian monarchy, at Nineveh and at Babylon, is, that they give clear intimations of the power, grandeur, and successful conquests of each; but with respect to *their fall*, the warnings of *prophecy alone* give anticipation, while there is no *historic* allusion, as after the event, and affirming its occurrence, either to the fall of Nineveh, or of Babylon. For the evidence of the reality of these, we have to refer to profane history, which at this period, or not long after, commenced its function; and the profane historians could refer to these as recent, and to the ruins of these capitals still before their eyes.

It is thus that revelation, with the fearless negligence, if we may so speak, which befitted infallible truth, forbears to note the fulfilment of its own predictions historically in respect of Gentile nations, unless it be in the most indirect manner, and leaves it to other witnesses on the world's theatre, to give information, which shall critically attest every iota of Divine prediction. It predicted the fall of Nineveh; it predicted the fall of Babylon; but that such events ever came to pass, it does not historically inform us; and as far as its own pages are concerned, we might be even to this hour in doubt, whether either mighty catastrophe took place in ancient times. It is Herodotus, it is Otesias, or rather it is the broad notoriety of the events themselves, spread through all nations, and still more the very ruins of Babel and Nineveh, which the reader of Scripture is necessitated to refer to, in order to determine whether its predictions had become a desolating, awful reality, or were to be themselves quoted as empty menaces, uttered over the capitals of the east. Yet several of its prophets, and some of its historians wrote after each of these events. Daniel and Ezekiel probably had often seen the ruins of Nineveh; and Ezra and Nehemiah, to say nothing of Malachi, wrote even after the capture of Babylon. But no affirmation of the fulfilment of earlier prophecy escapes them; though the Scripture history of *the fall of Israel and of Judah* is as ample and distinct as it is touching, in giving, at the end of both the books of Chronicles and of Kings, even with reference to prediction as fulfilled, recitals of the disobedience, the obduracy against warnings, and the last expulsion from their home, of the tribes of the once chosen race.

This peculiar reserve of revelation, in regard to the fulfilling of some of its grandest predictions, in the times before the Christian era, has its very striking parallel in respect to the great event predicted by our Lord in his own teachings. In these teachings, he again and again distinctly affirmed the doom of Jerusalem; its very manner and critical circumstances and cause; and the limit of time within which it should take place, as within the lifetime of that generation. After his resurrection, and ascension to heaven, his teachings were committed to record by various of his apostles and servants; and one, at least, of these records was composed after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the unbelieving race. Yet is there no allusion to this

event. We could never have ascertained, through the information of the Christian Scriptures, that any such occurrence had taken place at all, as that which the Founder of Christianity had so distinctly, in such literal language, and not by allusion or figure, predicted solemnly and positively, just before he left the world! Whether his prediction was realized, we have to ask strangers and enemies to the Christian faith. The Jewish historian Josephus, as well as the Roman historians, give us the assurance which was wanted. *These* recite the awful details of the fall of the holy city, while yet the disciple who leaned on Jesus' bosom was alive, and survived to compose at a date, perhaps fifty years later, the memorials of the life, and death, and resurrection of his exalted Lord.—This digression is long, but the singular fact on which it has dilated, and which was the occasion of our remarks, is one justly meriting some prominence. It is, that revelation refrained from alleging the verity, as fulfilment, of its greater predictions, and that Providence summoned to this office the writings of historians, who had no interest in furnishing attestations to the Divine record.

We now resume our account of the chief events mentioned in Scripture in connexion with the ancient capital on the Tigris; its grandeur, its early warning and penitence; its succeeding power, and the prediction of its fall. The first event presented to us in Scripture allusion to Assyria, in the historic period which we are now to review, is the mission of Jonah to Nineveh, about the year 862 B.C., and its happy result in awakening its sovereign and the whole population to penitence and humiliation; whereby the impending judgments provoked by their wickedness were arrested, and the doom and fall of Nineveh postponed for a space of more than 250 years. The whole event is memorable, not only in the miraculous circumstances which invest the prophet's own story, but particularly as being an instance, strictly singular in its kind, of the interposition of Divine Providence, in the manner of direct and open overture in arousing a mighty people of the Gentile world, to a sense of guilt and peril. In any other instances, where warnings were given to Gentile nations in the ancient world, from the oracles or messengers of the God of Israel, as in the case of Egypt, and less directly of Syria or Babylon, they were general menaces, provoked by the oppressive collision of such kingdoms with the nation, which the Almighty

had chosen as his witnessing people. But in the case of Nineveh, the interposition is strictly beneficent, and has sole relation to the rescue of the Assyrian population; and it is anterior, as far as appears, to any interference for good or for evil, attempted by Assyria in the affairs of Palestine. The instance, in a word, is that of Providence stepping out of its ordinary range, as far as direct prophetic mission is concerned, to snatch from ruin a people, whose crimes were crying to heaven for vengeance.

Assyria had yet its course of wider empire to run, and to become the instrument of punishment and destruction to the Syrian kingdom of Damascus, which now commenced its oppressions against the territories of Israel; and of chastisement and captivity to these tribes themselves, in a long and untraceable exile. The vastness of the city, at the time of the stranger prophet's appearance in its wide thoroughfare, and the great number of its inhabitants, are intimated in the sacred narrative, which bears the prophet's name. The city contained 120,000 souls, that knew not their right hand from their left; and if this expression denotes the very young, the number given affords the means of computing, conjecturally, the amount of the whole population, which is generally estimated at half a million souls; an immense number for that age, to be collected within a single city. As we have previously remarked, the whole account gives evidence of grandeur, power, and of a vast population, centered in the Assyrian capital, which would point back to long ages, as the period of the growth of the empire to its then existing greatness.

No name is given of the sovereign, who gave such anxious and sincere heed to the warnings of the prophet of Israel. Some have judged him to be the monarch known in Scripture history as Pul, of whom we shall afterwards hear in profane history as Belus II. Others deem the monarch of Jonah's time and mission, to have been the father of Pul; and this appears the more probable supposition. To the succeeding monarchs of Syria, the Scriptures allude by name; and they come into the range of Scripture reference prominently, by the interference, from this time, of Assyria in the history and fate of the ten tribes of Israel, and partly also, in the affairs of the kingdom of Judah. These monarchs of Nineveh are Pul, Tiglath-pileser, Shalmanezar, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Nebuchodonosor or Saosduchin.

The first of these monarchs, named Pul in Scripture, and supposed to be Belus II. of profane history, invaded the territory of the ten tribes, in the year 770 B.C., during the usurpation of Menahem. He exacted a thousand talents of silver from Menahem, as a condition of supporting the latter on the throne of Israel. He died in 747 B.C., and was succeeded by his elder son, Tiglath-pileser; while to his younger son Nabonassar was given the administration of Babylon, which was one of the subject provinces of Assyria.\* The celebrated Semiramis, the date of whose administration is placed a thousand years earlier in profane history, is supposed by Dr. Hales to have been either the mother, or the wife, of this younger son of Pul, and to have directed the affairs of Babylonia with eminent ability and success, after the decease of Nabonassar. In the year 740, the elder brother, and the sovereign of all Assyria, Tiglath-pileser, invaded the kingdom of Syria, at the solicitation of Ahaz, king of Judah, against whom Rezin the king of Syria, and Remaliah king of Israel, had confederated, and had brought up their forces to the very walls of Jerusalem. The invasion of the Assyrian monarch not only broke up the siege, with which Ahaz was pressed, but ended in the capture of Damascus, and the utter ruin of the Syrian kingdom, according to the words of the prophet; and still further, in the removal of a portion of the ten tribes of Israel, those dwelling east of the Jordan, to Media, where they were planted in Halah, Habor, and on the river Gozan (1 Chron. v. 26). These were the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Tiglath-pileser was succeeded in 726 B.C. by Shalmanezor, his son; and this monarch of Assyria invaded Israel a second time, on occasion of the revolt of their king Hoshea, and completed his conquest of Northern Palestine, by removing the whole population of the remaining seven tribes into Media, where they were divided by the whole breadth of Assyria proper, and of Mesopotamia, with its rivers the Tigris and the Euphrates, from all possibility of escape to their own country. No such interference as that of Cyrus, in the instance of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, took place in favour of these ten tribes. From this period they have become lost to history; and, though supposed still to subsist among the nations east of the Tigris, their existence and situation have hitherto baffled the

research and conjecture of travellers. At the period of this calamity to Israel, the conquests of Assyria under Shalmanezar were pushed still further west, and the whole of the coast territory of Phœnicia, with its flourishing maritime cities, submitted to his arms, with the exception alone of Tyre, the siege of which, maintained for five years, was terminated by his death. He was succeeded, B.C. 714, by his son Sennacherib, whose name has still greater prominence in Scripture, by reason of that expedition which took place in Isaiah's time against the remaining portion of the race of Abraham in Southern Palestine, which still subsisted in the kingdom of Judah and Benjamin, and had now for its sovereign, Hezekiah, lineally descended from David, the former monarch of all Israel.

The terror created by the immense force brought against Jerusalem by Sennacherib, and the deliverance wrought for the devout Hezekiah and his people, in answer to prayer, and in accordance with the denunciations of prophecy by the lips of Isaiah, are graphically depicted in the writings of the latter. The vast array of Assyria, in force numbering 185,000 men, was smitten by the angel of the Lord with destruction. The proud monarch returned to Nineveh, and was there assassinated by two of his own sons, who afterwards escaped into Armenia. He was succeeded, B.C. 710, by a third son, Esarhaddon, called by Ezra, "the great and noble Asnapper" (Ezra iv. 10), and the same who is alluded to under the name of Sargon, in the writings of Isaiah (Is. xx. 1). This was the monarch of Nineveh who, in a succeeding invasion of Judea, desolated its fields, captured Jerusalem, and took Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, prisoner; an impious prince, who abandoning the covenant of his fathers, had become an idolater, and a persecutor of the prophets and saints of the Lord (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). But, in the misery and humiliation of his imprisonment and chains at Babylon, keen remorse, and the convictions of earlier years, visited him. He became deeply and truly penitent for his crimes, and gave himself to prayer, and submission to the Divine disposal. His prayers were heard in heaven; and the heart of Esarhaddon was moved, to restore the young prince to the throne of his fathers. His penitence resulted not only in his own restoration, but in postponing the subjugation and fall of the monarchy of Judah for more than a century, and till after the fall and utter destruc-

tion of Nineveh, that ancient capital of Assyria, in which its empire was still centered.

The reign of Esarhaddon, the restorer of Manasseh, was eminently prosperous. The Assyrian empire under him extended over the whole of Western Asia, from the Tigris to Cilicia, and from Cilicia to Egypt. He was succeeded, B.C. 667, by a son, named Ninus, of whom nothing is known; and the latter by Saosduchin, better known as Nebuchodonosor, B.C. 658, whose administration was also distinguished by the extension eastward of Assyrian conquests. Thus every succeeding reign from the time of Pul, shows the advance and consolidation of Assyrian power in the east. Nineveh was still the chief capital, already rivalled, however, by the splendour and greatness of Babylon, which was ruled over by a governor, under the monarch of Nineveh. But the period of the fall of the Assyrian monarchy, in this its grandest seat of empire, was now at hand. Nebuchodonosor died about 636 B.C., and was succeeded by Sarac, or Sardanapalus, with whose reign the succession of the Assyrian monarchs of Nineveh was to terminate, and the mighty city itself, the glory of the east, after a duration of near 2000 years, to become a heap of ruins. The character of this prince has been variously represented in history; some authors imputing to him cowardice, as well as a luxurious effeminacy; while others affirm him to have been eminently brave and prudent. Soon after his accession to the throne, the Medes and the Babylonians revolted. Cyaxares ruled the former; and Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, was governor of Babylonia. These two princes united their forces, and formed the design of reducing Nineveh. After a siege of two years, during which Sardanapalus, secure amid the impregnable fortifications of his capital, and furnished with inexhaustible stores, defied and derided their attempts; an event took place, of which the distinct, but utterly incredible prediction, had reached the ears of the monarch himself, and doubtless was equally well known to his people, and equally derided by them as impossible to come to pass. This prediction had its origin, without doubt, in the prophecies of that land, the sovereign of which had in former years worn chains at Babylon, then subject to Nineveh. The form in which it came to him, was to the effect, that when the river, on whose

shores the city was built, became its enemy, then, *and not till then*, the fall of Nineveh would take place. This unexampled event now, however, came to pass. Such an inundation of the river occurred, in consequence of rains, that its torrent became irresistible, and broke in its descent with a force, such as to undermine and overthrow twenty furlongs of the great wall. The city became defenceless. Sardanapalus in his despair set fire to his palace, in which he had piled the treasures of his empire, and himself and his attendants perished in the flames. The victorious army entered, and having gathered the richest of the spoil left in the city, razed its walls and palaces to the very foundation. This event took place B.C. 606.

The fall of Nineveh did not, as we have already remarked, break the continuity of the Assyrian monarchy. Its consequence was a mere change of the seat of government to Babylon, the other great city of Nimrod's first monarchy, and one even more ancient than Nineveh itself. With the exception of Media and Persia, the whole of the ancient provinces of Assyria fell under the rule of Nabopolassar. Thus the dynasty only is changed, while all the western provinces of the empire remain the same. This fact it is important to note, as it is this which represents the unity, the ancientness and grandeur of the Assyrian empire, such as it is considered in the enumeration of prophecy, and as it is to be viewed in any just representation of history. The kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of, as the kingdom of Assyria, and as the first of the world's great monarchies. But this it could not have been, if distinct from the preceding empire centered at Nineveh. We should, then, have had an ancient earlier empire in Nineveh, of vaster extent, on the whole, than the kingdom of Babylon, and of a duration of nineteen centuries; whereas the remaining tenure of power in Babylon, after the fall of Nineveh, subsisted not more than seventy years; and such a brief existence, as a predominant power in Asia, could no way entitle it to be called the first of the world's empires, and the golden head of the image beheld in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Bearing with us in recollection, the fact, then, that the sovereignty of Pul, or Belus, is continued in Nabopolassar, the conqueror of Nineveh, and that Assyria remains, with the exceptions named, under his rule; we may now proceed with the remaining succession of the Assyrian kings at Babylon, till the final overthrow of the empire, and the



capture of its mighty capital by the arms of Cyrus, and his uncle Darius the Mede.

Nabopolassar had a son, even more distinguished than himself, for valour, energy and enterprise, and destined to advance the greatness of Assyria to the highest point which it was permitted to attain. This was Nebuchadnezzar, whose actions and character assume so much prominence in the pages of Scripture history and prophecy. While yet young, and in his father's lifetime, he commanded his father's armies, and led them to conquest. The course of his acquisitions lay westward, towards Palestine and Egypt. He defeated Necho, who had pushed his conquests as far as Carchemish, in Syria, and drove his armies back to Egypt. He next besieged Jerusalem, 605 B.C., and captured it; and suspending for a time the abolition of the monarchy, he carried away to Babylon many of the young princes and chiefs belonging to the noblest families of Judah and Benjamin. Among these first captives were the prophets Daniel and Ezekiel, together with the future martyrs of the plain of Dura. Jehoiakim was replaced on his throne, but revolted in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and was succeeded by Jehoiachin. This latter prince was deposed after a reign of three months, and his uncle Zedekiah was appointed in his place, Jehoiachin being removed to Babylon, where he ended his days in captivity. Zedekiah, by his alliance with Egypt, soon provoked the Babylonian monarch to send an expedition both against Egypt and Judea. The Chaldean army, having commenced the siege of Jerusalem, was summoned from the siege to repel the advance of the Egyptians, who retreated on the approach of their enemies, without fighting a battle, into their own land. The siege of the holy city was then resumed, and, after its miserable inhabitants had endured every privation and misery, the city was at length captured and its population put to the sword. Zedekiah and his sons and officers were overtaken in their flight near Jericho, and carried prisoners to Riblah, where Nebuchadnezzar had encamped with his army. He commanded the king's sons to be slain; and Zedekiah himself, having had his eyes put out, was removed in fetters to Babylon. Thither were also swept the chief families of Judah; and the predicted doom of the apostacy of the Jewish people was now consummated in the captivity of the last surviving part of the whole race.

The reign of Nebuchadnezzar was the era of the Assyrian empire's greatest power. His armies were not only successful against Egypt and Palestine, but they humiliated in turn every nation and people west of the Euphrates. That the king of Babylon was the instrument appointed, in a manner, by Providence, to the task of chastizing the nations around Palestine, is not only certain from the event itself, but is made specially evident from the clear predictions of the latest prophets, both before, and during, the captivity of Judah. These prophets were not commissioned alone for the warning of their own nation, amid the general decline of piety, and the rapid corruption of manners, and spread of idolatry. While the impending catastrophe of national ruin and captivity is proclaimed by the Lord's prophets, with an awful distinctness and emphasis of asseveration, their view becomes suddenly opened to contemplations of wider horizon; and prophecy occupies itself, in their declarations, with the fast-coming disasters, which were to overwhelm, like an inundation, all the surrounding nations. The Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Arabians, Sidonians, Tyrians, Philistines, Egyptians, Abyssinians, were all fated in turn to feel the scourge of Assyria; and their doom was clearly denounced by the prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Obudiah, and Joel. The conquests of Nebuchadnezzar left no people in these regions unpunished: the nations of western Asia were beaten to the earth, their cities desolated, and thousands of the people driven to exile. Hence it had seemed that the Assyrian empire was so fully established in its strength and wide dominion, that it could endure for a second period at Babylon equal to that of its history at Nineveh. But this great empire itself was now hastening to its fall. During the long reign of Nebuchadnezzar, which extended over a space of forty-six years, no reverse befell it. The monarch, instructed by the visions of prophecy, and even humbled and penitent under its warnings, notwithstanding the single instance of his presumption and frantic wrath against the martyr youths in the plain of Dura, yielded himself, in great measure, to the admonitions of Daniel, and sought in advancing years, after his recovery from madness, to strengthen his throne by righteousness, and by promoting measures calculated for the welfare of his people. He died at an advanced age, in 561 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach. The reign of this king was brief. Alarmed

at the union of the Medes and Persians on the east of his kingdom, he sought to combine against them the nations and kingdoms of Asia Minor, the Lydians, the Phrygians, the Cilicians, and others. This alliance hastened the movements of Cyaxares, and his nephew Cyrus. The latter as general of the Medes and Persians routed the armies of the Babylonians, and slew Evil-Merodach their king. Belshazzar now ascended the throne, fated to be the last of the Assyrian monarchs. His impiety and doom are well known. Whilst carousing in his palace, impiously profaning the sacred vessels consecrated to the temple service at Jerusalem, and bidding defiance to the God of Israel, the writing traced by a hand on the wall caught his eye, and smote him with dread. Its omen was quickly fulfilled. That night Belshazzar was slain, B. C. 553.

It is doubted, by some authors, whether Babylon itself was captured on the night of Belshazzar's fate. It is certain, that in him the Assyrian dynasty was extinct, and that Babylon submitted, at his death, to the rule of Cyaxares, or Darius the Mede, the uncle of Cyrus, and the same who treated the prophet Daniel with so much distinction. Darius appointed Labynetus, otherwise named Nabonadius, a Babylonian nobleman, as governor of the city and province; and it was the revolt of this prefect, as is deemed by Hales, after an administration of seventeen years, which brought on the final assault of Cyrus on the city, and its utter destruction, B.C. 538. That destruction, the theme of prediction equally with that of Nineveh, and portrayed in prophetic language in much the same cast of allusion, as destined to be effected by the instrumentality of the stream which was deemed its defence, was yet, in its special incident, critically different, both in the event, and in the language of the prophet. The river, on which either city was built, was to be the destruction of each, but in the two cases, by a remarkably different process or action. The Tigris, which flowed past the walls of Nineveh, was to overthrow them, and so to lay the city open to the invaders; the Euphrates, whose torrent flowed through the centre of Babylon, was to quit its course and leave its ancient channel in the city dry, so that the gates of brass availed not for defence, and the troops of Cyrus entered in a body along the channel of the stream. Thus fell Babylon, as the second capital of Assyria, and with it fell for ever the Assyrian monarchy. The city became

the prize of Cyrus, who, soon after, on his uncle's death, succeeded to the throne, both of Media and Persia. The city of Babylon was not immediately, nor even for a long period, destroyed. But in the course of ages the doom of prophecy upon it was fulfilled, and at this day, it is a point still undetermined where the site lay of that proud capital which once menaced terror to the civilized world.

We have been compelled to give these few pages of historic recital of the origin, epochs, progress, and fall of the Assyrian empire, in the two periods of its administration at Nineveh and Babylon, in order to render the conception of this first ancient empire, as a whole, distinct and well defined, so as to present a steady idea before the mind, in forming our judgment of its duration, extent, and effect on human civilization, and on the fortunes of the Jewish race. Its general influence on civilization arose from its amalgamation of the nations of Central Asia under political rule and organization; and this seems *all* that it effected, and has been explained already. But its intervention in the history and fortunes of the Hebrew race merits more detailed consideration, both as a subject of prophecy, and as an instrumentality fulfilling the purposes of Providence in chastising the apostacy of Israel and Judah. And, to refer first to the latter point, it will have been seen, that the Assyrian monarchy exerted the most decisive sway on the temporal destiny of the descendants of Abraham. Soon after the disunion of the tribes, the monarchy of Nineveh commenced its interference in the affairs of the ten tribes on the north and east of Palestine, and ended by invasions which swept those tribes to the far east, where they subsequently remained in an unknown captivity.

The warnings of this fate, held out to the Hebrew race, were proclaimed early in their history, and in pictures of awful distinctness. Even while entering as a conquering host on their possessions in the promised land, and while their great legislator was propounding the laws of their constitution, at the very outset of their bright and hopeful career as a nation, he was commissioned to set before them the dire consequences of apostacy from God, in descriptions which are even now terrific to read. And these are not represented as faint possibilities, which their disobedience might involve some hazard of calling into fulfilment, but as being absolutely linked to their crime, if they

departed from God, and from the grand aim of their election as witnesses for his rule and dispensations in the world. Nay, the inspired lawgiver of Israel went further. His anxious spirit, revolving the whole future, as it opened itself to his view in their history, tenderly solicitous for them as a father, and but too deeply acquainted with their failings and perverseness, in forgetting the Divine goodness, and the might of the Lord their God, was prompted, at once by these fears, and by gleams of preternatural vision, from which, in this instance, he would gladly have averted his eye, to tell Israel that, as the punishment of their crime, if committed, was certain, so there was a great, an awful probability of their crime itself being committed, in national unfaithfulness, and impiety, and in abandonment to idolatry—to the worship, by these delivered tribes of Israel, of the vain gods worshipped by other nations—the sun and moon and stars, and creeping things and images. The noble-hearted successor of Moses, on whom the care of Israel, and the conquest of Canaan devolved, Joshua the servant of the Lord, entertained the same solicitude, and felt the same predominating fears.

Thus the probability of a dark and woful reverse of their, then, sanguine prospect, was present to the thoughts of both their faithful leaders; and the climax of that reverse and doom was expulsion, after every misery of warfare and siege, from the very land on which they were now about to plant their conquering footstep, and a captivity, with every suffering that should befall the victims of revenge, contempt, and oppression, in lands far remote. Such was the obverse picture, in that twofold representation either of good or evil in the future fate of Israel, given by Moses in the very morning, and brightening dawn of their history. But the darker alternative seemed wholly beyond probability. How should it take effect? Even if they did fall from their trust in Jehovah, where was the instrument of his vengeance? if they should commit the crime, where was the means of their punishment? They were now a nation of warriors; youthful, brave, and resolute, trained to endurance and discipline; and, marshalled under the proud banners of their tribes, were prepared to wrest the land of the vine and olive from the dissolute and disunited nations of Palestine. This conquest they achieved. They divided the rich territory of Canaan's race amongst them; and though they failed in completing their

first mission, by extirpating the people whose abominations had cried aloud for this desolating purgation of the land, and thus retained amongst them those who should be again a trouble and a snare; yet, on the whole, their settlement in Canaan was prosperously fulfilled, and the Israelites grew a mighty people, who occupied the land from Dan to Beersheba. During the next four centuries of their history, under successive chiefs as a republic, though they had their contests with neighbouring small nations, and were often worsted in these; yet their growth and advance held on steadily, to the period of the monarchy under Saul, and David and Solomon; till in the latter monarch's reign, the limit of their kingdom reached the Euphrates on the east, and on the west, and southward, bounded on Arabia, Egypt, and the Great Sea. How are such a people to become a race of wanderers? What power can beat their armies to the ground, and dispossess them of their mountain fastnesses, homes, and valleys? Egypt was feeble, for foreign invasion, with the exception of Sesostri's reign. Philistia had been humbled; Tyre was only strong on her seas; Edom was a province of the Hebrew monarchy; and Moab and Ammon lived in dread of its arms. Where then is the remote and hidden source of peril, whence the predicted catastrophe of Israel's captive doom can arise? The answer is, *Assyria*. It was the steadily enlarging power of this kingdom of the east, first of Nineveh, then of Babylon, which made possible, humanly speaking, the fulfilment of the anxious legislator's warnings—warnings taken up by the voice of prophecy in advanced periods, and, as the awful event drew nearer, uttered with a more piercing intensity.

Doubtless, it was not only foreseen, but permitted in the all-wise dispensations of the Divine government, that such a power as that of Assyria should arise and extend on the Tigris; should gradually subjugate and combine the nearer nations round its centre; should break the power of Syria, which was an intermediate kingdom, at Damascus, between it and Palestine; at last, when Israel had been weakened by disunion, and become corrupt and hopeless in idolatry, should dart with irresistible force on its prey, and bear it away in its talons. Thus did the two kings of Nineveh, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser, with the countless forces of Central Asia under their command, overwhelm the once invincible legions of Reuben, Manasseh,

Naphtali, and Ephraim, and their kindred tribes of northern Palestine, and sweep them and their families to a distant locality. Thus also, at a period of two centuries later, did the conquering monarch of Babylon inflict the same doom on the impenitent tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which formed the monarchy of southern Palestine.

On the result of these invasions, and captivities of the chosen race, effected by the first of the great monarchies of the ancient world, we need not enlarge at present, further than to remark, that it differed, as is well known, singularly in the two instances. The ten tribes were retained in captivity, and not for a moment permitted by their conquerors to entertain a hope of restoration. And this was the natural sequel of such an event. It has rarely happened, or perhaps never, except in the single instance of Judah, that a people once torn from their country, and settled as serfs in the conqueror's territory, have been, by any relenting in their masters, or any experiment of policy, replaced in their former possessions, and voluntarily restored to their former power and rank as a nation. Fear, jealousy, and love of domination, would effectually preclude the idea of this. Hence the continued captivity of the ten tribes, in the east of Media, was only in accordance with the constant law, if we may so speak, of history. There, whither Providence removed them, they remained; and it would have required a preternatural interposition of Providence to effect their deliverance and restoration. The ten tribes, which had been foremost in apostasy, had to bear the full completion of their fate. They bore, as slaves doubtless for a long period, every imposition of toil and wrong, which their tyrants in Nineveh and Media could inflict. Of the huge sculptured masses lately brought to this country from Nineveh, some represent the banded lines of foreign captives, with the rope or chain passed on from neck to neck, and with both arms tightly bound behind them. These have been deemed, and with great probability, to have been no other than the unhappy bondsmen of Media, who once were the nobles and chiefs of Mizpeh, and Samaria, and Mount Carmel. It is probable that no redress or mitigation of their lot took place, in the first generation of these serfs, who now toiled around Halah and Habor, and the river Gozan; nor even for their children of the second or third generation. They exhausted the full cup of misery to the dregs.

They lived on without hope of seeing their fatherland; its loveliness, fertility, and beauty, became a dream; and the grandeur of their ancient monarchy, the glory of their ancient history, the deliverance of Egypt, the awful voices of Sinai, their conquests, their laws, their holy worship, the whole system of their significant sacrifices and institutions, became melancholy remembrances and traditions, and their songs heart-rending monitions of homes never again to be revisited or seen.

Such, according to the most certain laws of human history, may we deem to have been the bitter experience of these tribes of Israel in their Median settlement. So far, our imagination can pursue their history. But all record became silent regarding their fate, after their removal to the east. That they did not become extinct we have, besides the natural improbability of such a fact, the intimations of prophecy, which seem to reserve even these long lost tribes for a distinguished place in the world's future fortunes. All the tribes of Israel, those ranked under Ephraim, as well as Judah, are, according to the views of many, yet to reassemble on their own rightful soil, and to reunite as a nation, holy unto the Lord, penitent for their father's unbelief and their own, and consecrated, burning missionaries of the cross. Thus it is considered that the ten tribes have continued to exist; but in what locality they have remained, or whither they may have wandered, there has been yet no probable conjecture. In the convulsions which befell the Assyrian empire, in her contests with Media and Babylon, it is possible that the Israelites gradually regained personal freedom, and the means of bettering their condition. They doubtless, also, for a time at least, maintained their union as a distinct race, amid all the wars and changes of the east; for we have proof of the possibility of this, and of the invincible tenacity of Hebrew unity and life, in the example and usages of the Jewish branch down to our own times. It is to be considered as in some faint degree probable, also, that calamity did not efface the remains of higher truth and conviction in the breasts of these captives, but rather endeared to them every such principle and national usage, as identified with their ancient oracles and their ancient glory and happiness as a people. This is all we may conjecture of their existing and enduring character, wherever they may subsist among the nations, or under whatever unsuspected name of perhaps some well-known



people of the east, the ten tribes of the Assyrian captivity may be preparing for their part of marvel and of restoration, in the dispensations of God, in the coming ages of the world.

This enduring mystery, which rests over the fate of the lost tribes, makes but all the more marvellous, the different sequel of the captivity of Benjamin and Judah. In these tribes, occupying the richer valleys of Southern Palestine, and possessing its capital, the holy city, the seat of its ancient throne, and its temple and oracles and services, the monarchy of David's house subsisted, without break in the line of his descendants; till its last king, in the person of Zedekiah, his sons being slain, was led with his officers and chiefs of families, barefooted and in chains into captivity; whither also thousands on thousands of the population, who had survived the hardships of war and the siege, were ruthlessly driven, old men and young, women and children, in bands across the desert. These tens of thousands were located in districts around Babylon, and near the confluence of its great rivers, but it would seem, at no period, apportioned as slaves to different owners, though as a people strictly guarded, and harshly treated as captives of war. We infer this, from the facility of their subsequent liberation, when the edict for that measure went forth, and from the general tone of prophetic allusion in reference to the captivity. The early elevation also of Daniel, and other Jewish youths, in the court of Babylon, would point to the same conclusion. The captive population were treated with rigour, and compelled to toil; but the ignominy and bitterness of personal slavery to single masters, it is probable, they were spared from undergoing. Nevertheless their captivity, in all human appearance, was as hopeless, and as much destined for perpetuity, as that of their kindred tribes, located eastward of the Kurdistan mountain range in the countries lying towards Cabul. How should it be otherwise? What hope was there that the inhumanity of conquerors would relent in their favour; that a proud empire, victorious in all quarters, would part with a population, whose toil and thrift could be made so availing to augment its resources, by cultivating its fields, and building new cities? Who, that was a stranger to the destiny of prophecy, or that looked at the captive people with the judgment of mere human conjecture, would have formed the dream, that many of these thousands, and a host of their children, would in no distant

year be treading once more the pavement of their holy city, and celebrating with anthems, and incense, and tears, the topmost stone laid, in completion of a second temple;—would be consecrating themselves anew as a people of the living God, and preparing to run a new career of history as a nation, a course of some five centuries, marked by vicissitude, but still more distinguished by national piety, and a lofty fidelity, even to the death, to that faith in the God of their fathers, for departure from which, the captives of Judah were now in bonds? Who, we say, beholding these families dispersed in captivity, would dream of their happy return, of their altered character, and their second prosperous history in the land of promise? What power should interfere for their rescue; for they had forfeited all hope of a second deliverance, such as that effected by the plagues of Egypt? And if no visible miracle was to be hoped for, what invisible miracle could be expected, except by the believing and praying few, which should secretly move the heart of monarchs to relax the grasp of their bondage, and bid them go forth FREE?

Yet this was the marvellous counter sequel, appointed to the second captivity of the same race, to the same Assyrian monarchy, though to be effected, when that monarchy should have itself come to a perpetual end! But before we contemplate the circumstances of their restoration—for that event properly belongs to the next empire of the east—we have to direct attention to the moral and religious effect, wrought under the Divine blessing, by the calamity of their bitter foreign sojourn, in the minds of the captive tribes of Babylon. This circumstance, viewed aright, is the strangest result of all, and one which it required a bolder faith to anticipate, than even their release as a people from bondage. Yet such *was* the striking moral phenomenon, developed in the feelings and character of the sons and daughters of Judah, during the period of their humiliation and exile. This was in singular contravention to the tendencies apparent in the national character, previous to the captivity; tendencies to unbelief and idolatry, which were so intense, so inveterate, so incorrigible; which, in fact, had precipitated the last remnant of God's chosen people on their fate, and had led to their being exiled from the seclusion and security, where they had been placed for the cultivation of faith and piety, into the midst of nations who were mad upon their idol gods, and where every object and in-

fluence might seem to conspire to perfect and confirm the apostasy of a captive and depressed people. In truth, humanly considered, the prospect of the faith of Jehovah surviving in the world, or of its oracles being preserved, or of its dispensations holding on their course, to the times of Messiah, was now faint, and every hour dwindling. The probability, to the apprehension of all, but the few gifted with prophetic foresight, or the not much larger band of those who still clung to prophecy, must have been strong, that the knowledge of the true God was on the verge of becoming extinct on earth, and all the purposes frustrated which had been centred and unfolded in the election and history of Abraham's race.

If this last remnant was, in Jeremiah's time, becoming more and more disobedient, and in larger numbers secretly or openly bewitched by idol ceremonies and incantations, what was there in the experiment of plunging them into the midst of the idolatrous world in the east, amid the fire-worshippers of Persia, or Baal-worshippers of Babel, to arrest the idolatrous tendencies of Judah, or to give hope of their sudden, universal, and irrevocable recoil from idolatry, for all time to come? Yet this was the moral miracle, effected by the Divine blessing, aiding the instructions of their prophets, and the lofty example of a few of their noblest youths, on the national character during the captivity. In their own land, and encompassed by the monuments and public services of their religion, no amount of revelation, of warning, or of miracle, availed to check their propensity to imagine there was something of reality in the illusions of idol worship, and to abandon themselves more and more to forgetfulness of God! But in Babylon their spirit meditated a different order of recollections. Brought face to face with idolatry in its grandeur and strength and voluptuous rites, for unreserved intermingling with which, their previous tendencies had fully prepared them, the captives of Babylon suddenly recoil, and learn to hate, as horrible falsehood and degradation, the belief and the worship which had seemed so innocent and fascinating before! They recalled the revelations of Sinai, and the incense fires of their temple worship to the One Infinite, Invisible Creator, the God of their fathers; and they remembered and recited in their desolate homes, in lowly orisons, the precepts of their law, the songs of their bards, and the ad-

monitions of their prophets. They meditated on all the ways of God towards them as a people; and not only thought of his goodness and mercy in ages gone, but read in the bitter incidents of their own condition in Shinar, the verity of those lessons, which Moses had uttered a thousand years before for their warning. And thus, or by some such process of reflection, prayer, and penitence, in the very land of captivity, the current of infidelity in the remnant of Israel was checked, the heart of the people was changed, and they attained a fixedness and fidelity of faith in their own oracles, that has subsisted to this very day, and is a rebuke to the too prevalent unbelief of the Christian world. Accordingly, when the period of their trial, predetermined, and indeed even announced by prophecy, was coming to an end, and the edict was to go forth for their return, the Jewish tribes were in a state morally and religiously fitted to receive the boon, and they returned to their own land, a nation, in a manner, prepared anew for the Lord.

Before quitting the contemplation of, what may thus be termed, the moral restoration of the Jewish tribes, while bearing the chastisement of apostasy in Babylon, we wish to say a word in reference to some opinions, lately propounded on that subject, to the effect, generally, that such restoration was directly brought about, not by reflection, prayer, and a devout recurrence to the inspired oracles in their possession, at least amongst the leaders of their tribes, and the chief of their priesthood; but by contact with the systems of belief, prevalent east of the Tigris, particularly in Persia, and the countries adjoining. The sojourn of the captives in the Babylonian territory, it has been suggested by some writers on Jewish history, resulted in a higher intellectual culture, and a marked enlargement of view; and particularly, that the doctrine of the Divine unity, and even the notion of a resurrection, were familiarized to their thoughts, and the vanities of idol systems exploded, from intercourse with the modes of Persian thought and Persian belief. This method of accounting for so striking a change on the Jewish habit of belief, carries with it an air of philosophic reflection and refinement, very authoritative to some minds. It is a method of explanation consonant to the speculations on history, of late come into fashion, in which slight incidents of fact, or of faith, or of no faith, are expanded or generalized, and some obscure intuition or principle,

presumed to be involved in them, extracted and magnified, and a mighty force ascribed to it, of subtle penetration, diffusion, and change, in its contact with the mind of any given people.

Thus the dreamy notions of what is called, in the grand generalizing style, Brahminism, are expanded and fashioned into philosophic systems, which are supposed to have moulded the belief and the character of whole nations, instead of being the confused and inconsistent imaginations of some few of the priesthood. In like manner, systems of pure theism are imagined to have had a wide diffusion, and a pervading influence amongst the Persian people, even some six centuries or more before the Christian era; insomuch, that a race of serfs could not be dispersed among them, or rather in neighbouring provinces, without becoming familiar with their philosophical mysteries, and even their character becoming more successfully moulded, intellectually and morally, by these Persian speculations, than by the inspired oracles, which had been inculcated on them from their childhood upward! We are fain to demur to the solidity and soundness of this whole manner of speculation, when extended, in this comprehensive sort of inference, to entire nations. We much doubt the assumption, that before the times of Cyrus any clear system of theism was maintained in Persia; and much more, even if some few speculatists held it, that such a system, till after Zoroaster's age, had any pervading dominance in the popular belief. Further, we think, if such system of belief had prevailed in preceding ages amongst the Persians, its first effect and influence should have been realized in the altered convictions of their neighbours and fellow-subjects the Babylonians, anterior to the experiment on the Jewish race! But at Babylon, idolatry was rife down to the eve of its fall and capture. The feast of Belshazzar, was alike a scoffing of the One True God, and a triumphing libation to the gods of Assyrian worship, to Bel, and Baal, and Bacchus. How, then, were the Jewish slaves to learn from Persians truths so clearly and sublimely revealed in their own Scriptures? how were they to become more deeply and permanently converted to theism, by contact with the Persian thought, forsooth, than by the teaching of their own prophets and priesthood, stamped, as such instructions were, with a Divine authority, and riveted home on their hearts by afflictions, of which they had been clearly, though vainly forewarned?

Viewing therefore the whole fact, as we are constrained to view it, regarding any pure theistic belief, if such at all then existed in Persia, as being of faint influence and confined range; and knowing that the Jews possessed in their own national history, in their inspired Scriptures, in the associations of their childhood with Divine truth and the Divine worship, and particularly in the faithful ministration of living prophets of the captivity, of Ezekiel, of Daniel, and of many devout Levites, the adequate instrumentality of truth, under the heavenly blessing, for their recovery from delusions, which they had rather conformed to in practice, than admitted as truth; regarding, we say, the position of the Jewish remnant in these relations, we see in their own inspired oracles fully enough to account intellectually for their national renovation; while in the religions of Persia, philosophic or popular, in the period referred to, we look in vain for the definite forms of thought, or the authoritative force of impression, which could give a right bent to the character of a dispersed race of serfs in Babylon.

More than all, we may allege, in behalf of these views, the fact that no allusion to eastern belief, unless it were one of abhorrence, escapes the pen of the later prophets; that there is not the shadow of a feeling, as if these prophets, or the people whom they addressed, bore any reverence, much less obligation, to Persian culture, as for some higher enlargement of view; and that the character of the returning host, when they reassembled in their own land, was not that of minds infected with foreign associations, and disciplined in a newly instructed system, but that of a people returning, in the full simplicity of their hearts, to the old ways and thoughts of their fathers. Was it not so? Would these Jews, under Ezra, Joshua, and other chiefs, have been tolerant of the imputation, that they owed *anything* to their eastern sojourn, except the salutary remembrance of wrongs and sufferings; or that all of true enlightenment was not derived to them from the Holy Scriptures, to which they were again listening with tears, intermingled with the smiles of gleaming delight? But we must at length quit this subject. The digression has not been in vain, if it should have convincingly impressed on the reader the fact, that the truth of God, and his blessing, alone availed for the recovery of Israel from their tendencies to unbelief.

In one respect, we are quite ready to admit, the sojourn of the Jews in Babylon may have directly benefited their national character; and that was, by enlarging their knowledge of the nations around them, and acquainting them with the secular learning and the general policy of the great kingdoms of the east. We only deny that there is proof that they borrowed religious thought from the Persians; much less that their restoration to the intenser belief of theism, and their fixed antipathy to every mode of idolatry, were the result of intercourse with the fire-worshippers of Persia, or with any followers of Zoroaster. In a word, we maintain, that the bitter experiences of their captivity, and the revolting effect of the contrast of heathen abominations, as compared with the principles of their own oracles, combined, as we have remarked, with the teachings of their prophets and the more devout of their priesthood, contributed under the Divine blessing alone to their national regeneration, in their return to a full and exclusive regard to the inspired Scriptures, and the institutions of their holy law. With respect to the purer system of religious thought, said to be promulgated by Zoroaster, there is very high probability, that this itself, as to any juster notions of the deity it contains, was borrowed from the sacred oracles, or from the information of the prophets of the captivity. So that the right view to be taken of the results of the captivity, religiously, and in any direct form of influence, should be to compute its effect on *eastern* thought, in diffusing the knowledge, however faintly, of inspired truth, and thus preparing, though in a distant manner, for the final communications of the Christian dispensation.

Doubtless, as we have said, the Jewish captives benefited directly in secular knowledge; in enlarged views of the history and condition of nations around them, and the acquisition of whatever stores of genuine learning, or science, had been accumulated in the great centre of civilization in the east. The wisdom of the east had for ages gained celebrity; and however obscure or fatuous were the religious views it included, doubtless, in the lore of ancient traditions it was affluent, and still more had it valuable knowledge in the facts and observations of astronomy, and probably in the sciences of geometry and numbers, as well as in the arts of sculpture, architecture, and painting. Intellectually also, it is possible, that the nations combined under

the Babylonian rule, and especially the families of nobles and chiefs collected around the sovereign, and in the capital, exhibited a somewhat higher culture in secular knowledge, and generally perhaps greater activity of thought, than were characteristic of their Jewish captives, with the exception always, not only of their prophets, whose wisdom in all matters shone with a prominent lustre in the midst of heathen counsellors, but also of their more devout and meditative princes and priests, such as Zerubbabel, Mordecai, and Ezra. The mass of the Jewish people previously, while dwelling in the seclusion of Palestine, not only were unfamiliar with the affairs of the world, in the more distant of its kingdoms, but, through neglect of those oracles which otherwise had compensated, and infinitely more than compensated, the absence of all other information and culture, they had sunk low in brutish imbecility and ignorance, retaining nothing of their national pretension but its pride and bigotry. This ignorance and stupor of thought were now in great degree dissipated. The fearful calamities of war, of siege, and of captivity had aroused them from their dream of confidence, impiety, and ignorance; and their long, and after a while, mitigated captivity, in the midst of an empire, whose capital was the seat of so much grandeur, science, and general activity, awakened the Jewish prisoners to a more inquisitive habit of thought, and taught them slowly to feel and think as men, while it impelled them anew to appreciate and study the oracles of an infinitely higher wisdom already in their possession.

Having thus attempted to set in its just light the moral change wrought on the Jews in Babylon, we now return to review the fate of the great empire, which had thus become instrumental, in the purposes of an overruling Providence, in removing both portions of the descendants of Israel into captivity, and so in chastising the chosen race for its apostasy. With the fall of Nineveh, we have seen that the seat of Assyrian power was transferred to Babylon. In its Babylonian dynasty, the Assyrian monarchy rose to greater power, and pushed its conquests to a wider extent, than had been achieved at Nineveh under the reigns of its last kings, Saosduchin and Sardanapalus. It attained a grandeur never attained by any empire before, and an extension, considered in respect of the circumstances of its age, the widest possible in the then dispersed condition of nations. Hence, in the visions beheld or interpreted by prophecy, it held



the rank of the first of the world's great monarchies. It was the golden head of the image seen by its chief monarch, Nebuchadnezzar. It was the winged lion, in the vision of the four beasts, beheld by Daniel; impetuous, swift, and resistless in its assault, and the terror, for a time, of all the nations. It had desolated Moab, Ammon, and Edom. It had broken the strength and dissipated the riches of Tyre. It had humbled the pride of Egypt, and brought the Mizraim dynasty to its last struggles. It had snatched Judah as a powerless victim from its sheltered home, and lodged the nation in its own well-guarded central territory around the Euphrates. But in not more than fifty years after the death of the great conqueror of Palestine, of Tyre, and of Egypt, *his* kingdom was broken, and Babylon the second capital of the Assyrian monarchy captured, as we have seen, by a king expressly named by prophecy, and with circumstances critically correspondent to its obscure, yet special intimations.

But the denunciations of prophecy went much further than the capture of Babylon, or the fall of the great empire, of which it was the centre. It was predicted, that the mighty city, whose foundations and massive structures had been reared full twenty centuries before Cyrus' time, by the first monarch of men, Nimrod, was destined to utter destruction, and its very place to become a pool of water, the resort of the owl, the dragon, and the serpent. Although Babylon had been permitted, as the instrument of Heaven's chastisement of the eastern nations, and particularly of the chosen race of Abraham, to triumph in its aggressions, and to spread its conquests from Parthia, or even Bactriana, to the hundred-gated Thebes on the Nile; yet its aggressions were not acts of justice, but fearful and cruel wrongs on humanity, and their permission altered not their intrinsic character, nor authenticated their injustice and cruelties as righteousness and benevolence. Hence its career of conquest was, however overruled for other ends, a career of guilt; and Babylon, which had gathered the nations under its talons, so that "none might peep or mutter," became by its oppressions, the very centre of accumulated guilt and wrong, and an object, consequently, of Heaven's direct vengeance, when the time of its fulfilled destiny should arrive. Although it was permitted to prevail against the remnant of Judah, and its success in the siege of Jerusalem was so certain, that the prophet was commanded to counsel surrender and submission to Israel, the criminality of such invasion of a people,

which had done other nations, and much more Assyria, no wrong, was not therefore suspended or annihilated; but it constituted, rather, in the estimate of that Higher Sovereignty, which permitted such chastisement to Israel, the last and greatest aggravation of the guilt of the eastern monarchy. That such should have been the fact, that this view of it is just, which admits its permission, and does not exonerate its motive, its injustice and cruelty, can be doubted by none who can intelligently judge of the moral rule of the universe, either on the abstract principles of right and reason, or by the declarations respecting the Divine government and dispensations, given in the inspired oracles. Assyria therefore was to come to a perpetual end, and its last and grandest capital, the fortress of its power, the storehouse of its riches, with its battlements guarded by the Euphrates, with its hanging gardens, which rose in terraces of beauty and verdure towards the sky, with its squares and streets and palaces, which struck the Palestinian captives with awe as they traversed them in chains, and which filled every far-travelled stranger of other lands with irrepressible wonder—this mighty, this guilty, this hated capital, was doomed by prophecy to have no vestige left of its very walls, but to become a spot of desolation and fear to all beholders.

But this part of its history and fate was not immediate, and appeared, for a considerable period, not even within probability. Cyrus did not destroy the city, nor even meditate its destruction, after its guilty and dissolute population, in the hour of their feasting, madness, and pride, were put to the sword. Its battlements and buildings, wherever injured during the siege and capture, were again repaired, and beautified; and its palaces and gardens carefully preserved. After the death of Belshazzar, or Nabonadius, (whichever of these we are to consider the last of its rulers, during the assault of Cyrus,) Babylon became the residence of Darius, the uncle of the Persian hero; and under this ruler, the Hebrew prophet and prince was continued in his eminent place in the government, and his people experienced an alleviation of their condition, such as reconciled the younger generation among them to their foreign home. To their subsequent fortunes under the Persian rule, we shall have again to return; but pursuing to its issue the predicted fate of the capital, we remark, that by Cyrus the first step was taken

politically, which led to its irrecoverable decay and ruin. The Persian monarch would not make Babylon his residence, or the seat of his government. He dwelt in his own capital of Susa, or in Ecbatana, the seat of his Median ancestors; and Babylon from being the first city of the world was degraded to a provincial city, from which all wealthy families, except the retinue of the governor, gradually removed. Its decline from this point went on rapidly. Yet 200 years later, Alexander the Great resolved to rear its walls anew, and to make it a second time the capital of the east; but this purpose was frustrated by his death. On the division of the empire, Seleucus made Babylon for a time the chief seat of his eastern division of the Persian monarchy; but ultimately he selected another spot for his capital, on the western extreme of his territory towards Asia Minor, and built Antioch, long so famous in history, on the banks of the Orontes, at the recess which divides Cilicia from Syria. Babylon thus fell into neglect, and though it survived to succeeding ages, even as late as the Mahomedan conquests in the seventh century, yet its fate was certain, its decay steadily advancing; till at last, when the east re-emerges on the face of history, after the revolutions of the middle ages, the last of its structures has disappeared, with the exception of the huge mounds, which are named, from tradition, the tower of Belus, and the Birs Nimroud; and travellers with difficulty conjecture the outlines of that vast ruin, where once human pride, grandeur, and empire triumphed, without fear, or presage of the future.

Such was the end of Assyrian power, and of its greatness in the two capitals of its dominion, now to be explored only in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon. Heavy as its oppression bore on the race of Israel, bitter as was the captivity it inflicted on the disobedient tribes planted in Canaan, and complete, and in appearance irretrievable, as seemed the desolation which the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon had consummated over the land of Emmanuel, when the flood of the invasion rose up to the neck and face, and swept the land clean of its inhabitants; the fate of these guilty cities was unspeakably more desolating and complete. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin were again restored to their own land; and it is the belief of many, that the tribes whom Nineveh tore from their home, survive still in the east, though unrecognised, and await, under the name and aspect of some flourishing and war-

like people, the signal-standard of prophetic interference, which shall disturb the rest of nations with fearfulness, but shall summon the lost tribes to their possessions; and at the same time, shall gather to the same land, now trod by the Ottoman oppressor, the millions of Judah's race, descendants of the second captivity in Assyria's other capital, to reunion with Ephraim, and to reunion with the whole visible church of the living God. This event, they believe, the word of Jehovah has spoken of as determinately as it foretold the fall of Babylon and Nineveh; and if so, the very desolation accomplished in these cities by the vindictive sentences of prophecy, speaks from their silent mounds and ruins, of the fulfilling of the sure words of bright promise to the dispersed descendants of the captives, that once trod their streets, heavy under the chain and bearing with them the still heavier woe of a heart broken with grief and despair.

This was the historical close and catastrophe of the first of the world's great empires, in both centres of its monarchy, first, and for ages in Nineveh, and next in a brief era of power in Babylon. These two most ancient of cities, the very earliest founded after the Deluge, and the earliest mentioned in history, were more strictly identified with the existence of the Assyrian dominion, than was the case with other capitals of subsequent empires in their relation to the ruling state. They were singly the great capitals of Assyria; and when each of them fell, the empire they represented was no more. Subsequent empires exhibited a difference in this respect. They comprehended populations more thoroughly organized, and countries brought into cultivation and covered with cities, towns and hamlets innumerable, with capitals of vast extent and grandeur in each province; and although the central administration was fixed in great cities, and the last empire identified with the name and power of the capital on the Tiber, still the base of political power was vastly more wide, and whole countries with their many fortified cities had to be subjugated, before the empire was brought into peril. This was not the case in the first empire. When Nineveh fell, the empire fell in its first dynasty, and would utterly have ceased, but for its other equally ancient capital, which had been through all periods associated with Assyrian rule, and to which, on the revolt of Nabopolassar, and the capture of Nineveh, the power of Assyria was transferred. Then, when Babylon fell, the Assyrian empire itself for ever

perished, and the empire of Persia succeeded, which extended over new acquisitions on every side, and, stretching to the Indus on the east, and to the Ægean Sea and the Nile on the west, had not its name, any more than its polity and power, centred in, or vitally identified with, any of its chief cities. The empire of Persia was not the empire of Susa, Persepolis, or Pasargadæ; as the subsequent empire of Alexander was not the empire of Pella, nor, except in a general import, the empire of Macedon.

We have offered these remarks, to show how peculiar was the position held by Nineveh and Babylon in the first great political organization known in history, and how it was, that the fall of these terminated such empire. But the circumstance named has a further meaning. It explains, in a degree at least, why it was that the intimations of prophecy became concentrated on these cities, and depicted with such minuteness and unvarying constancy their fall and utter desolation. And the review of history is not ended without taking account of the full completion of this sentence. The interferences of Assyria with the race chosen of God to inherit Palestine, and to preserve the Divine oracles and institutions, were, as we have before remarked, of calamitous and cruel effect in each case, though permitted by Providence, or even appointed as chastisement. The aggressions of Nineveh and of Babylon were an unmitigated disaster, and continued without relief, or hope of redress, in the character and purpose of the Assyrian empire itself. The last act of Assyrian power, on the very eve of its fall and disappearance from history, was meditated insult on their religion. Hope came from another quarter; from the Persian conqueror, whose victory effaced the Assyrian power and imperial name.

But while Assyria thus, in all its acts, was a power of deadliest hostility to the chosen race, and to the institutions and oracles of revelation confided to their charge, and in a manner identified with their existence, this same empire, in the marked character of its fall and the desolation of its cities, is made to contribute almost in a higher degree than any other hostile power of antiquity, to the verification and illustration of those very oracles, which the captives of Babylon retained in their possession. Scarcely any fate of empires teaches so solemnly as that of Assyria; scarcely any ruins speak so significantly as those which

are hidden in the mounds of Kouyunjik and Nimroud, or in the few mounds near Hillah on the Euphrates, which seem to tell where Babylon once stood. Hence it is due to our subject, in any complete review, however general in outline, of the Assyrian empire in both capitals, to make some brief reference to their *ruins*, and that, not so much on the ground of their antiquarian or historical interest, in any remains that have been of late discovered, as on account of the emphatic and perpetual testimony which such ruins bear to the truth of prophecy, and the singular confirmations which recent discoveries have brought to light, of the truth of Scripture history, touching on the times of Sennacherib and other monarchs of Nineveh, and of contemporary kings of Israel and Judah, after the disunion of the tribes. These remains occupy thus a distinct ground, as a subject of contemplation, when compared with those of Egypt, or of other ancient states. In regard to Egyptian monuments, the reason for any such rapid survey as has been attempted, arose from their extent, number, and grandeur as monuments of the past. They are historically significant, and fraught with manifold interest, as the picture of ancient grandeur in the great monarchy founded on the Nile. But they bear no prophetic meaning. Prophecy in Egypt, at least chiefly, speaks in the history of the *Mizraim race*; of that original population which surpassed all nations of antiquity in its mystic lore, and the structures of art, and which fell, beyond the example of any other ancient people, into deep and perpetual debasement. It is in the fact and continuance of this debasement of its original ruling race, that Egypt for ever gives responsive echo to the words of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Not so Assyria. In that land of the world's first empire, it is the destruction of its capitals, so that they have no vestige left, except such as the heaps and mounds of their ruins showed on the surface, and no memorials except the few figures, sculptured slabs, and inscribed bricks, that those mounds concealed till the very day we live in—it is this complete destruction, leaving but just the identifying traces of their past situation and glory, which testifies to the truth of the predictions uttered by God's holy prophets.

The successful explorations effected in our own day on the banks of the Tigris, have brought from under the mounds of Nineveh, and of perhaps neighbouring cities, many single monu-

ments of ancient art and grandeur; and the chief of these having been transported to this country, and placed under our gaze, they have naturally attracted a deep interest and wonder, at once from their character as works of ancient art, and the significance of their inscriptions; joined to the mystery of their long concealment and oblivion, and the recency of their discovery in this age. But except as the remains of, perchance, an equally distant antiquity with some of the Egyptian monuments, those brought to light in the mound of Nineveh can in no sort compare with the surviving structures of art on the Nile. These latter have existed where they stood, over the face of the land, some 4,000 years ago, though with broken columns and sometimes defaced inscriptions. They cover miles and leagues with their masses and broken walls in various districts; while in numberless places distinct structures, such as the monolithic temples, remain entire and perfect as in the moment when they were finished. The great Pyramids still rear their heads aloft, uninjured through the ages; and, under ground, the cities of the dead have preserved, in indestructible form, the remains of human beings committed of old to their silent chambers. Egypt is a land of antique grandeur preserved; Nineveh and Babylon are the monuments of a grandeur destroyed,—all but the few remains which the pickaxe and the spade have within the last twenty years brought anew to the light. What then are the remains of Nineveh, interesting in many respects as they may be—yet what are they, as to amount, or value, or beauty, or greatness, compared with the marvels of gigantic structure, which have continued to attract the gaze of all nations and ages, on the Nile, from the Delta to the islands of Phylæ and Elephantine near its cataracts?

These remarks are necessary by way of representing the precise value to be set historically on the Nineveh remains. It were easy to fill many pages with the details of these, and some brief notice we shall proceed to give of them. But it consists more immediately with the character and design of these chapters, to attempt the estimate of their proper amount and the significance they bear in other points of view than those of their value as remains of art. And such significance they do possess, even of deeper interest than if the very halls of Sardanapalus had still continued above ground; or the streets, which Jonah

traversed, had still endured, in their main track of walls, to tell of the vast extent of the Asshur capital.

The prophetic doom pronounced over both the Assyrian capitals was their utter destruction, and in a manner, obliteration from the face of the earth. Their sites were to become the home of the owl and dragon, and the desolation was to continue through all time. Not only the peculiar manner of the destruction of each was foretold, but the *perpetuity and completeness* of the destruction. We have seen how the first portions of prophecy were verified in the capture of Nineveh and Babylon, each by the agency of the stream which had been its confidence and protection, and each by a singularly different but clearly foretold operation of such agent, in the one case undermining and overthrowing the fortifying walls, and in the other being made to desert its channel, and so laying open the access to the foe. But the subsequent portions of prophecy failed not of an equally perfect and stern verification. Desolation occupied the site of Assyrian grandeur in both centres, and holds possession there for ever. This was what the prophets of the Lord affirmed. This is what history has exhibited, and what the desolate regions on the Tigris and Euphrates present for ever to the traveller's eye.

What circumstance is wanting, we ask, to the fulfilment of these ancient predictions of Heaven? What degree is wanting to the completeness of the verification? What emphasis, in any condition or fact, can be added to the result realized in the history of each of the capitals referred to? Where are the lofty and impregnable battlements, the spacious squares, the mighty towers and palaces, the hanging gardens, of Babylon? Where precisely did it stand? Travellers cannot even give confident determination regarding its site. Mounds, and these but few, are with probability given as the heaps of its ruins, but only so far as to indicate generally its situation. With regard to Nineveh, its ruin was completed much earlier, so that within three centuries after the event, the mound which our countrymen have so recently excavated had become formed and piled over those remains of halls and sculpture, which we, of this day, are the first to behold, since the age of their destruction.

\* Nothing can be more striking in the story of the fall of great empires, than the completeness and rapidity of the ruin of



Nineveh, and the interment and oblivion of its scanty remains throughout the space of 2,500 years, till their discovery in the present day. It is probable that even when Herodotus wrote his narrative of its capture about 450 B.C., or a century and a half after the event, such obliteration of the site of Nineveh had long been completed. Just 50 years later, in Xenophon's time, 401 B.C., it is certain that there were to be seen only the mounds which were first disturbed and broken open about twenty years ago. As we have more than once noticed in former allusions, the retreating 10,000 Greeks under Xenophon passed close by these mounds; and Xenophon alludes to them in his account of the expedition, without seeming to be even aware that they were all that remained of the ancient capital of Assyria, of whose fall, as well as former grandeur, he had doubtless read in the pages of the elder Greek historian. No allusion escapes him intimating such recognition. About seventy years later, Alexander fought his last great battle against Darius very near this spot at Gaugamela, the battle commonly called that of Arbela; and his armies not only must have passed this spot, but probably a portion of his squadrons were encamped around it. But neither would it appear, that Alexander or any one of his officers surmised, that the mound of Kouyunjik covered the remains of the first great capital of the east. Nor did any circumstance arise in all after history to excite the attention of any conquerors of Asia, or of the wanderers of its shifting population, to these heaps on the Tigris. Prophecy had set its seal of oblivion, as of desolation, on the spot, where once, perhaps, near a million inhabitants had dwelt, where monarchs had their palaces, where armies had brought in the spoils of battles, and where captives from the banks of the Jordan had arrived in droves. All remained still and desolate in this scene of Asshur's first habitation, and of Nimrod's early sway, from the fifth century before Christ; and the mounds on the Tigris drew no more regard than any other hillock on the earth's surface.

Meanwhile beneath these shapeless mounds lay concealed masses of wall, huge statues of monstrous figures, alabaster cylinders inscribed with the Assyrian cuneiform character, vast slabs of bas-relief depicting monarchs and their battles, and numerous minute works of art, or of domestic use, fabricated in the time of Esarhaddon, or far earlier, and existing in their

concealments in perfect preservation, many of them just as if finished in this very period when we gaze on them, in all freshness of colouring, such as are coloured, and in the exquisite minuteness of the inscriptions traced across their surface.

It was in the year 1820, that Mr. Rich, the British Consul at the Persian court, influenced by the curiosity natural to one familiar with the themes of prophecy, when resident in the very region of their ancient fulfilment, was led to attempt the first survey of the districts where Babylon and Nineveh had in ages so long distant once stood. And although he remained not long enough in that country, for the carrying out any explorations beneath the surface of the elevations seen in either district, his survey was most successful in determining the fact that such elevations were piles formed of the ruins of the eastern capitals, and in drawing the attention of his countrymen to those spots as scenes for future discovery. The subsequent explorations, which resulted in such interesting discoveries on the Tigris, were commenced twenty years later by M. Botta, the French Consul, and were followed up by the enterprising labours directed by Mr. Layard, and others of our countrymen, on a much larger scale. The mountain-heaps around Mosul were at many points excavated, and discoveries were made which, in a manner, reproduced ancient Nineveh, though in fragments of her ruins, to the view of modern nations. The history of these researches is too well known to all readers, to render any minute repetition necessary here; and moreover the very results of them, exhibited in the splendid and astonishing collection of Assyrian remains assembled and arranged in our Museum, are now as familiarly understood by every class as are the statues and columns of our own public buildings. Nevertheless, the attempt may not be without its use, to give a condensed view of these discoveries, in the general outline of the scene and chief points of excavations to this time executed, in the chief classes of the remains brought to light, in the presumed era respectively of their ancient construction, in the historic notices given by their inscriptions as far as deciphered, and in the confirmations they incidentally lend to Scripture history.

On the east bank of the Tigris, opposite to Mosul, the fortress named Mepsila by Xenophon, lies the Kouyunjik mound, which

is deemed with certainty a part, at least, of the ruins of Nineveh, if not its central position. Lower down on the same side of the river, at a distance of about eighteen miles, is the mound named Nimroud, which also has furnished the most striking, if not the largest number of specimens. There are two other mounds, Khorsabad and Karamlas, which are situate each about twelve miles in the interior, or distant from the Tigris, and at points answering respectively in N.E. direction to the mounds Kouyunjik and Nimroud, and equidistant with the latter from each other. So that the four chief mounds, considered in these positions, might be described in a rough manner as occupying the angles or corners of a square; first Kouyunjik, and Khorsabad twelve miles N.E. of it, on the north side; and lower down, Nimroud, and Karamlas in the same relative position, on the south side. Or otherwise viewed, one side of the square thus indicated rests on the river, and the other in a line, twelve miles removed, in the interior, connecting Khorsabad and Karamlas. This representation is given only as a general outline, so that the position of the mounds singly and relatively may in a loose manner be comprehended, and without any aim at minuter accuracy. Considering the relations of these positions, and that the ruins in all are of the same Assyrian type and character, it was natural to conjecture, that they were all parts of the one great Assyrian capital, with the interior spaced out in gardens and squares; and it has been judged that the vast area thus occupied, would pretty nearly answer to the description of the extent of Nineveh given in the book of Jonah, as being of three days' journey. It may be mentioned also, that the intermediate space, now a vast desolate region, is covered by smaller mounds here and there, apparently formed of the like ruins. Such would be one hypothesis regarding these mounds in a combined whole; and perhaps future explorations may lead to discoveries which may verify it, by tracing the connexion from point to point more fully. But the view more recently taken seems favourable to their separate history, as sites each of a distinct ancient city; the Kouyunjik mound occupying that of Nineveh; the Nimroud mound being conjectured as the remains of Calah mentioned in Genesis; and the two other interior mounds, Khorsabad and Karamlas, as the remains of other cities of like extent and grandeur. Perhaps this latter view is the correct one; only, in that case, the extent of

Nineveh would seem to be much less, as indicated by the Kouyunjik remains, than would answer to the description in Jonah. At the same time, the other positions as distinct cities would, in being subject to Nineveh, compose equally a part of the imperial grandeur of Assyria; and would further indicate the populous character of the region around, as covered by great cities, towns, and hamlets.

These general remarks fully suffice for our immediate object, which was to convey an idea of, what may be called, the system of the Nineveh mounds, whether all parts of Nineveh itself, or remains of neighbouring cities near the capital; and they will render intelligible any subsequent reference to each position.

The first of these mounds which European enterprise explored, was that of Khorsabad, twelve miles north-east of Kouyunjik and Mosul. It was here, that, in 1840, the explorations were commenced and carried forward, under the direction of M. Botta, of which the valuable and splendid acquisitions in various specimens are deposited in the Louvre. After him, Mr. Layard commenced his researches at the Nimroud mound on the Tigris, or the supposed site of ancient Calah; and subsequently both Mr. Layard, and others of our countrymen, prosecuted their explorations on the upper mound of the Tigris, that of Kouyunjik, on the site of Nineveh. These are the chief mounds already explored, and this was the order in which they were selected for the laborious and persevering researches, which have resulted in discoveries so full of interest in that region, where all on the surface is bare and desolate, but where the ground teems underneath with the remains of human art and labour in the ages before the history of Europe has any credible date or record.

Such being the order of the explorations at each of the three points named, a different and highly interesting arrangement has been given of these as to the chronology of their ruins respectively, or the date to which, conjecturally, the specimens of art obtained from each are to be referred. The natural expectation would have been to find that they all partook of the same general antiquity, or would have their masses confusedly and uncertainly referred to different epochs, and many specimens in each belonging to all the periods indicated. But the fact would seem not to be so; and although, doubtless, there

must be in each some remains of the period more prominently indicated by the rest, yet the results given by the eminent explorers referred to, affirm a different chronology for each mound or ruin of ancient city; and this with so much pre-nance in each, that the collections as a whole, respectively, belong, some to earlier, and others to later reigns.

If it be inquired how so marvellous a precision could have been attained, the answer is more marvellous still, if possible, and that is, that the cuneiform inscriptions on the statues and bas-reliefs under each mound, give the names of different kings, and thus attest, as a clear record, the date of their construction. To these inscriptions we shall refer presently, but it will interest the reader, at this point, to notice the chronological arrangement they give to the Assyrian discoveries. This arrangement is as follows. The entire range of dates comprehended by the whole is from about B.C. 930, or a century before Jonah's age, to 625 B.C., or very near the age of the destruction of Nineveh. This gives a period of 300 years for the epoch of these Nineveh monuments as a whole. But this period is divided, and distributed over localities in the following manner, though, of course, in a general and conjectural inference. First, the Nimroud monuments are the most ancient, and these range in dates from B.C. 930 to B.C. 747, or over a period of near 200 years. Next after these come those of Khorsabad, and their dates are from 747 B.C., to 721 B.C., being extended, apparently, during the twenty-five years' reign of some single monarch, who then occupied the throne. Last, come those of Kouyunjik, on the site of Nineveh, which we should have expected to have contained by far the most ancient class of remains. Such remains of a far earlier period may yet be discovered; but those already obtained, are of the latest date of all, and range from 721 B.C. to 625 B.C., or to the era of the mighty capital's utter fall and ruin. Such is the chronological distribution of these discoveries; and it cannot be doubted that anything like such precision as this adds unspeakably to their interest and value. Thus viewed, they are like the open book or scroll of antiquity, suddenly unfolded to our gaze and exposed to our scrutiny. Not, it is true, that the informations these sculptures give are hitherto found to be very ample, much less detailed; yet, if the results referred to have even an approximate

exactness, they are an instance almost unique, except in the revealed record, of a sort of general history preserved for twenty-five centuries, on limestone masses and alabaster slabs, for the information of these later ages of time.

The mention of such result in the Nineveh discoveries, must naturally excite the reader's deep interest in regard to the means by which such information has been attained, namely, the inscriptions traced on the monuments brought to light. The fact that these monuments bore the trace of some regularly formed system of characters, chiseled on the harder substances, and traced in the alabaster slabs, became of course immediately apparent; but it was not till after some years that the investigations of Rawlinson and Hincks gained something of a mastery of their combinations and import. At one time there has been some question as to the reality of such import having been detected; in other words, as to the truth and justness of the principle of interpretation adopted by the scholars just named. But of late, these doubts have given way to a growing conviction and acquiescence in the certainty of the results given. Two species of character have been discovered on the ancient Assyrian monuments, one consisting of cuneiform, or wedge-like or arrow-headed characters, used, it is supposed, as in Egypt, for public records, and the other of a less angular form, and called the Cursive writing, used for sacred and private records, and resembling more or less the ancient Phœnician, the Babylonian, and the Jewish character. We profess not to give the minutiae or details of this subject, even to the extent in which they are accessible to the general reader. Enough has been said to call attention to the interesting fact, that their meanings are becoming more and more mastered with the progress of investigation. Happily the means and opportunities of remarking these inscriptions are available to all in our own metropolis. Let the reader, when he next visits the Assyrian remains in our Museum, direct his eye to the characters which, in regular and close lines, are crowded around the zone or centre of the royal figures in the Nimroud collection; or let him inspect closely, in one side chamber in the Assyrian room, the writing traced on the small cylinders in the glass cases; and he will see what it is not possible to doubt is written character, traced as nicely and minutely as the printed page before him, and crowded with such writing like the pages of a book. Whether

or not the key have been discovered for deciphering what he sees, he will not doubt that meanings fully expressed, and of deep interest, lie embodied in these inscriptions.

The meanings of such inscriptions, as thus far deciphered, go to the extent of giving us the reigns and names of kings, and of some of their conquests. The names occur of Esarhaddon, and Tiglath-Pileser and Sennacherib; and what must interest Scripture readers still more, references occur by name to Hezekiah, to Jehu the son of Nimshi, and to others of the kings of Israel and Judah, as giving presents or tribute to the Assyrian monarch.

Thus astounding are the revelations, and coincidences with the sacred record, brought up from the mounds of the Nimroud ruins; and whereas infidelity, though of late less bold in such doubts, affected once to question the ancientness and truth of the Old Testament record, there are now produced to light from the deep earth, and the silence in which for ages they had slept, the attesting records of a long departed empire, and a vastly distant time, to relate as contemporary history some of the chief events given in the books of Chronicles and of Kings.

We purposely decline attempting even the entire summary, much less the details, of the excavations already effected at Kouyunjik, and in other spots near the Tigris. The chief results, in specimens innumerable, are accessible to all; and are placed in admirable arrangement in the Assyrian Chambers of our Museum. They consist of single huge figures sculptured in limestone masses, such as the winged bulls and lions, of long slabs of bas-reliefs, descriptive of sieges, battles, and lion-hunts, and of smaller specimens collected in cases, such as remnants of vases and small images. With respect to the extent of chambers or walls explored in separate mounds, we may remark, that at Kouyunjik seventy-one chambers have already been explored, which are panelled with nearly two miles of bas-relief; and twenty-seven entrances formed by colossal winged bulls or lion-sphinxes have been uncovered, while yet scarcely half the palace has been examined. Hence some conception may be formed of the vastness of the whole area of ruins underground, both at the mound near Mosul, and in the mounds already named; or rather we may say, the whole district around, in a square of some fifteen miles. Yet in trying to realize to the imagination such extent of the remains of the great city, or cities

near the Tigris, let it not be forgotten, that they are remains absolutely buried under ruins and *débris*, and have been so since the fall of Assyria. Portions have been dug up here and there, but the aspect of the Nineveh region is unchanged. The desolation decreed by prophecy alone meets the eye; and such will remain the condition of that scene through all time. We are apt, in gazing on the products of ancient art, placed before us in such huge masses, and in such numbers of smaller specimens, to admit the illusion that much of Nineveh itself is restored to the light; forgetting that what specimens we see have been brought up with immense labour from dark caverns or excavations, where, if much more remains concealed, it is probable it will for ever remain so.

The circumstance which lends a thrilling interest to the spectacle of these remains, is, not their beauty or finish as works of art, but their vast antiquity, and still more the fact of their being lost to view for more than 2,500 years, and brought to light in our own day. In antiquity, however, as in grandeur, they are incomparably surpassed by the chief remains of Egypt; but the one circumstance of their long interment underground, their undecayed preservation, and their reproduction now to the view of mankind, awakens in the beholder's mind, as he gazes on the bas-reliefs or winged figures, a train of associations and feelings most difficult to unfold and express, yet thickly crowding on our thoughts in the rapid interchange and transition of fancy between the dim and distant past, and the present moment. We think of the wide chasm of time which separates the gazers of this day from the generation which last beheld them, twenty-five centuries ago; and the thrilling thought comes upon us, that, in all this period, we of this age are the *next* gazers, in succession to those who beheld them last, and perished in their downfall! To say nothing of generations in Nineveh vastly earlier, who marked perhaps the finishing and erection of some of the winged figures that we see, or glanced with admiring smile to some completed alabaster slab; how exciting to the imagination to realize the fact, that we come next after the Ninevites of 606 B.C. to behold the art-remains of their then most ancient capital! What a history of the world was unfolded *after* that era of their last siege, and their last glance



to the heavens above them! How little could the sages of Chaldea prognosticate this distant future in which we disinter the ruins of their proud cities! What conception could they form of a time forward so remote as our present age? Gifted with thought and intelligence as Europeans are now, they must have felt as helpless as we should feel, if they ever attempted to glance forward into the unfathomable futurity 3,000 years beyond their own day—that very point of the future in which we gaze on works which their hands fashioned!

Interesting however as the Assyrian remains are on the ground of their antiquity, and the recency of their discovery after the concealment of twenty-five centuries, and most valuable as their inscriptions must be deemed, in their chronological references; considered in themselves as products of art, or rather as representations of human thought, they must be regarded with very different feelings. They are far from beautiful or impressive as works of art, or as expressive of the artist's ingenuity and design; and as symbols of Assyrian thought, they are repulsive in the highest degree. The fancy of Assyrian mechanics, perhaps they may be called, rather than artists, sought the display of skill only in the monstrous union of parts of different animals, seldom in the accurate imitation even of any single created form. Winged bulls or lions, eagle-headed figures with human bodies, and such like productions, form, in sculpture, the highest reach of Assyrian invention. The impression of the whole is coarse and repulsive, and marks the degradation of minds sunk in the basest idolatry. In this respect, it is true, they furnish a perpetual monument of instruction, as expressions of what human thought can become and devise, when fallen from the adoration of the One Supreme Infinite Intelligence to the worship of sensible objects, whether among any creatures existing, or figures formed by human hands. Thus polluted and degraded became the very conceptions of Chaldea; and the baseness of its art-remains gives ample proof that it merited the visitations, which committed all the grandeur, alike of Babylon, and Nineveh, to the oblivion of their huge ruin-mounds.

With respect to the site and ruins of Babylon, it would seem almost useless to extend this chapter by any specific notice of them. The success of explorers has been next to nothing on the scene once occupied by the second and last capital of the Assyrian

empire. The ruin-mounds near Hillah on the Euphrates, situate about forty-eight miles south of Bagdad, are considered with good evidence to be remains of the ancient city of Nimrod, and of Nebuchadnezzar. The country round exhibits traces of building; and remains of bricks abound, both burnt and unburnt. Some of the bricks discovered bear also cuneiform characters, marking the names of kings and inscribed with legends. But little progress has hitherto been made in deciphering these, and the specimens are not so numerous as to give promise of the like interesting discoveries as those of Nineveh. Yet in many points, and in later chronology, they corroborate the Scripture history. Other remains than traces of walls, or of angles of towers, there are none hitherto discovered. Four great mounds lie in the distance around; the one named Amran, 1,000 yards long, and sixty feet high; Kasr, a mound 700 yards square, abounding in much brick, varnished tiles, and fine earthenware; and it has a colossal statue of a lion fixed on a granite pedestal of coarse workmanship; Mujelibe, which means "overtured," and is an oblong mound, 200 yards long, by 160 broad; and Birs Nimroud, a mound six miles N. of Hillah, 762 yards in circumference; its western elevation 198 feet, and having on the summit a solid pile built of the finest brick, twenty-eight feet at the base, and thirty-seven feet high. This number of heaps, whatever specimens of art or labour they may conceal, is all that remains of Babylon the Great!

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE PERSIAN EMPIRE.

Prediction given of an empire to succeed the Assyrian, and Persia indicated through the name of Cyrus—Central territory of the new empire, east of the Zagrian mountains—Hardier qualities of the Elamite population—Rise of the kingdom of Media—Deioces, 693 B.C. and his successors, to Cyaxares or Darius the Mede—Different accounts of Cyrus given by Herodotus and Xenophon—War against Babylon—Defeat of Evil-Merodach—Death of Belshazzar—Babylon surrendered to Darius—Nabonadius appointed governor—His revolt and second capture of Babylon by Cyrus—Effect of this event in reviving the hope of Jewish tribes—Decree of Cyrus for their restoration—Succession of prophets continued through the captivity—Return of the tribes homewards—New career of five centuries given to the Hebrew nation—Death of Cyrus 529 B.C.—Cambyses—Darius—Revenue of Darius—Expedition against Greece and defeat at Marathon B.C. 490—Xerxes 485 B.C.—Second expedition against Greece and defeat at Salamis 480 B.C.—Europe freed from peril of subjection to Asia—Other contests of Persia with Greeks in Asia Minor—Beneficent results of Persian dominion on the condition of the chosen race—Books of Ezra and Nehemiah—Their value as the inspired record of the Restoration—Jewish remnant which continued at Babylon—Rebuilding of the temple commenced—Interruption, and decrees of Artaxerxes and Darius—Results of the attacks of Persia on Greece—Period of Athenian supremacy, and the era of Greek intellectual development—Expedition of Cyrus the younger with the 10,000 Greeks 401 B.C.—Expedition of Alexander and fall of Persia 332 B.C.—Duration and character of the Persian empire—Its less prevalent idolatry—Wider extent of empire compared with the Assyrian—Its populations consolidated from the Hellespont to the Indus, and thus prepared for submission as a mass to any new conqueror.

THE next in the succession of the ancient world's great empires is that of Persia. In the period of the very acme of the Babylonian, or Assyrian empire, under Nebuchadnezzar, it was announced by the Hebrew prophet in the halls of the monarch, that another kingdom would arise, which should bear rule over all the earth. This kingdom represented the silver portion, or the breast and arms, of the image seen by the present ruler of the nations; and in a subsequent vision, presented to the prophet himself, it again appears under the figure of "a bear, which raised itself up on one side, and had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of

it; and unto it they said, Arise, devour much flesh." Thus variously was it pre-announced, and during the highest epoch of Assyrian power, when its dominion was at its most absolute point, and its widest extension, that this mighty empire should fall, and be succeeded by another kingdom, which should grasp and hold some three other kingdoms, or provinces, seemingly not yet comprehended under Assyrian rule. There was, at the time of this strange prediction, boldly proclaimed by Daniel, no symptom apparent of Babylonian decline. The nations of the then civilized world in the east were submissive, and were held to their allegiance by a wide-pervading terror of that empire, which had beaten down and crushed every people that had ventured to contend against it.

The picture of this prostration of all kingdoms, under the overshadowing dread of Babylon, is strikingly set forth in the words of a far earlier prophet of Israel. All nations kept motionless and silent before it; none dared "peep, or mutter, or move the wing." To presage the fall of Babylon, to foretell that its empire should cease and disappear for ever, and be followed by another monarchy, which should occupy its place, and hold the like sway over the world, was to utter what might seem raving, rather than foresight, at that point of time when prophecy thus unveiled its perceptions. Never in the whole period of Assyrian domination, did it seem more secure, or more confident of perpetuity. No power had then struggled into prominence, that seemed destined to overthrow the existing empire, and to take its place. Yet, as we have seen, in the very reign of Nebuchadnezzar, his kingdom was hastening to its fall. Long before the youthful Jewish prophet, who now gave faithful warnings to this monarch, should himself feel the approach of age, the might of Assyria would be broken for ever, and history repeat and ratify the words of the watchman in prophocy, "Babylon is fallen, Babylon is fallen." The counsels and warnings of Daniel were not disregarded by Nebuchadnezzar. His own reign, after the season of his humiliation, was prosperous and prudent. It was prolonged to the extended period of forty-six years; and the kingdom passed to his successor, Evil-Merodach, in undiminished strength and lustre. The reign of the latter was brief; and before his death, the peril became apparent which menaced his throne. Belshazzar succeeded, and his confidence

is deemed with certainty a part, at least, of the ruins of Nineveh, if not its central position. Lower down on the same side of the river, at a distance of about eighteen miles, is the mound named Nimroud, which also has furnished the most striking, if not the largest number of specimens. There are two other mounds, Khorsabad and Karamlas, which are situate each about twelve miles in the interior, or distant from the Tigris, and at points answering respectively in N.E. direction to the mounds Kouyunjik and Nimroud, and equidistant with the latter from each other. So that the four chief mounds, considered in these positions, might be described in a rough manner as occupying the angles or corners of a square; first Kouyunjik, and Khorsabad twelve miles N.E. of it, on the north side; and lower down, Nimroud, and Karamlas in the same relative position, on the south side. Or otherwise viewed, one side of the square thus indicated rests on the river, and the other in a line, twelve miles removed, in the interior, connecting Khorsabad and Karamlas. This representation is given only as a general outline, so that the position of the mounds singly and relatively may in a loose manner be comprehended, and without any aim at minuter accuracy. Considering the relations of these positions, and that the ruins in all are of the same Assyrian type and character, it was natural to conjecture, that they were all parts of the one great Assyrian capital, with the interior spaced out in gardens and squares; and it has been judged that the vast area thus occupied, would pretty nearly answer to the description of the extent of Nineveh given in the book of Jonah, as being of three days' journey. It may be mentioned also, that the intermediate space, now a vast desolate region, is covered by smaller mounds here and there, apparently formed of the like ruins. Such would be one hypothesis regarding these mounds in a combined whole; and perhaps future explorations may lead to discoveries which may verify it, by tracing the connexion from point to point more fully. But the view more recently taken seems favourable to their separate history, as sites each of a distinct ancient city; the Kouyunjik mound occupying that of Nineveh; the Nimroud mound being conjectured as the remains of Calah mentioned in Genesis; and the two other interior mounds, Khorsabad and Karamlas, as the remains of other cities of like extent and grandeur. Perhaps this latter view is the correct one; only, in that case, the extent of

there be deemed no distinction to prevail in the constitutional tendencies or capacities of different branches of the human family. Perhaps none such exist, at least at the origin and fountain-springs of nations; and all the differences subsequently manifested in their character and general course of history, are to be considered as resulting, under the destination of Providence, from their different locations on the surface of the globe. But even if such were the case, the Japhethites, eastward of the Zagrian line of mountains, and the Elamites, or Shemites occupying the elevations, fastnesses and valleys, lower down in Persia, seemed by their position destined to become ultimately the master races of Central Asia; and particularly the Persian population, which had long been subject to Chaldea, and latterly to the Median kingdom. Moreover Persia had, under its earlier name of Elam, held rank as an independent, though small kingdom, as early as the time of Abraham; a period some thirteen centuries remote from the era of the fall of Babylon. It was the king of Elam or Persia, who, with four other princes, made the expedition across the desert to invade the cities of the plain of Jordan. After that time, Elam fell, along with other neighbouring provinces, into subjection to Nineveh, or to Babylon.

The time was now arrived, for this people of Elam, under the conduct of a hero, descended from one of their chief families, to break loose from obscurity and subjection, and having gained the superiority over the Medes, to array the united forces of both kingdoms against the power of the Chaldean empire. It is necessary however to premise, before proceeding with Cyrus' conquests, that the Medes had already, about 180 years before his time, successfully achieved their independence, as regarded the Assyrian rule, and had gradually become powerful as an independent kingdom. This event took place during the reign of Sennacherib king of Nineveh, about the year 710 B.C. But after this successful revolt, according to Herodotus, the governing authority in Media fell into decay, and the population, loosely scattered in villages or towns, became lawless and desperate, while the strong preyed upon the industrious and defenceless. It was at this crisis, as we formerly mentioned, that Deioces, a man of eminent prudence and sagacity, made himself useful in arbitrating disputes, and gradually succeeded in repressing wrong. In this primitive sort of Divan, originated in his

own village, his general integrity and firmness gained him so much esteem and influence; and his authority had become so effectual in spreading quiet through his district, that when, on pretence of the exigence of his own affairs, he discontinued his exertions as a composer of strifes, and abandoned the people once more to their own resources, the misrule and misery ensuing became such, that whole villages and tribes united in soliciting the resumption of his superintendence. This was the event for which Deioeces had prepared. He accepted their proposal, on condition that they should erect for him a palace, and build a city, and make him in fact their monarch, invested with the command of a body-guard, and a fortress. This, according to the narrative of the historian named, was the occasion of building Ecbatana, famous for the grandeur of its palace and battlements, and as the capital of the newly-formed kingdom of the Medes.

Deioeces held the sceptre for about thirty years, and was succeeded, B.C. 663, by Phraortes. This monarch deemed his kingdom strong enough to engage in a contest with Assyria, and made an attack upon its capital Nineveh, but was defeated by Nabuchodonosor. Cyaxares his successor, B.C. 640, resumed the war against Nabuchodonosor, and having defeated him, laid siege to Nineveh. This siege was broken off by an event of a highly singular character, being no other than an incursion of the Scythians, as is related by the historian, into central Asia, and their successful acquisition of rule over the countries from the Euxine to Syria, for a period of twenty-eight years. The whole event is very strange both in its first occurrence, in its consequence, and in the circumstances of its termination. For Herodotus adds, that these fierce foreign masters were at last all ensnared by the inhabitants in the stratagem of being invited to feasts, and made drunk, and so were slaughtered to a man in one day. The account proceeds, that after this interval of twenty-eight years, Cyaxares i. again resumed the attack on Nineveh, but at this time in conjunction with Nabopolassar king of Babylon, and finally succeeded in the capture and utter destruction of the city, B.C. 606.

The next king of the Medes after Cyaxares i. was Astyages, the grandfather on the mother's side of Cyrus. He succeeded his father Cyaxares, B.C. 601, and his reign over Media and

Persia was prosperous, and extended to a period of thirty-five years. We need not follow Herodotus in his minute anecdotes respecting the birth of Cyrus, his exposure as an infant, and fortunate preservation by the herdsman employed by Harpagus. Such anecdotes, though not in themselves improbable, or inconsistent with the barbarous practice of Eastern countries and courts, rest not on any but traditionary authority, and may have been exaggerated or invented in order to attach marvel to the birth of the heroic prince, who founded the second empire of the world. All that is pretty certain is, that Astyages had two children, Cyaxares, otherwise known as Darius the Mede, and a daughter named Mandane; and that Mandane was given in marriage to Cambyses a Persian chief, of the Achæmenian family, and gave birth to Cyrus, the future ruler of Persia, and conqueror of Babylon.

At this point, the accounts respecting Cyrus differ, as to the manner of his acquisition of the Median throne, and his gaining for Persia the enduring ascendancy over Media, and eventually the sovereignty over all the nations of the East. The story of Herodotus proceeds to tell of his recognition, while a youth, the reputed son of the herdsman who saved him, by his grandfather Astyages of Media, in consequence of his resolute spirit while at play with other boys; and of his escape to Persia, where, after he had grown to manhood, he gradually collected and trained an army of the hardy Persian mountaineers. These, it is added, he led on to the attack upon the northern kingdom ruled by his grandfather; and, having discomfited the Medes, and made Astyages prisoner, he united Persia and Media under one sceptre. Xenophon, on the other hand, makes Cyrus succeed, without violence, his uncle Cyaxares II., after having served as general both under his grandfather Astyages, and particularly under Cyaxares in the first attack on Babylon. What proportion of the circumstances in either narration may have been founded on fact, there are no means of determining; except to the extent, that such a heroic character as Cyrus arose at this time in Persia, and probably was sprung from the family of its rulers; that he became sovereign of Persia and Media; that he captured Babylon, and succeeded to the whole of the ancient dominions of Assyria, on the east towards the Indus, and westward to the Mediterranean and to Egypt. It is also certain, that Darius the



Mede, who is the same as Cyaxares II., was associated with Cyrus in his early conquests, whether as his superior, and as sovereign of Media, or as governor of the latter kingdom under his nephew. This Darius it was, who became governor of Babylon, after its first capture by the youthful victor, and who treated the Hebrew prophet with the regard and favour, which his wisdom and magnanimity had called forth towards him in preceding years, under the Babylonian monarchs.

It is necessary however to give a summary of the chief events which are usually mentioned in the life of Cyrus; and in this we shall follow the account most generally acquiesced in by historians. The birth of Cyrus is commonly placed in the year 599 B.C. When about sixteen years of age, B.C. 584, he joined his grandfather Astyages of Media, according to Xenophon's account, in an expedition against Evil-Merodach, the young son of Nebuchadnezzar, and defeated him. In the year 559 B.C., when he was forty years old, he succeeded to the throne of Persia, and soon after renewed the war against Evil-Merodach, who also, only two years before, had succeeded his father Nebuchadnezzar. Cyrus was again victorious; Evil-Merodach was slain, and was succeeded by Belshazzar his son. In the year B.C. 554, in conjunction with his uncle Cyaxares king of Media, Cyrus again defeated the army of Babylon under Belshazzar, and forced the latter to retreat into the shelter of his own capital. Belshazzar was slain, such is the more probable account, by conspirators in the following year, B.C. 553, on the night of the impious festivities in the royal palace; and Cyaxares, otherwise named Darius, gained possession of the Babylonian kingdom. Darius doubtless remained for some period at Babylon, and during this time had intercourse with the prophet Daniel, and with other chiefs of the Hebrew captivity. He then withdrew to his own capital in Media, and appointed Nabonadius as governor of Babylon, under the rule of Media. Darius died B.C. 551; and now Cyrus at the age of forty-eight succeeded to the throne of Media and Babylon; Nabonadius still retaining his place as governor of the latter province. In the interval of the next three years, from 551 to 548 B.C., after he had become sole ruler of the reunited provinces of Ancient Assyria, Cyrus extended his conquests westward, to the rich provinces of Asia Minor.

These provinces had been hitherto exempt from the encroach-

ment of the Assyrian empire, except in the occasional incursions of Sardanapalus, who is said to have reared monuments of his conquests in Cilicia, in the building of Tarsus and Anchiale. But Asia Minor, west of the mountain passes of Cilicia, had remained secure from eastern aggression. Meanwhile, not a few smaller kingdoms had arisen on its western margin; and, together with these, the whole line of its coast had become peopled by colonists from Greece, of the Ionian, Dorian, and Æolic tribes; and cities had been reared, and small states founded, on the coast and islands of the Ægean, which had rapidly advanced in wealth and civilization. Of the interior and native kingdoms of Asia Minor, that of Lydia had become the strongest and richest. Under Croesus it had gradually extended its bounds in a northerly direction to the river Halys; and at last, only a short time before the expedition of Cyrus westward, Croesus had successively vanquished the forces of the Greek towns on the coast, and Smyrna, Colophon, Ephesus, Miletus, and Halicarnassus, became subject to the rich sovereign of Lydia.

Thus a powerful kingdom had arisen in Asia Minor, rich in its interior provinces, its cities, its rivers, its fertile plains, and varied mountain ranges; but above all enriched by the acquisition of the prosperous small states, with their beautiful cities, and noble harbours, reared by the Greek races, along the windings and indentations of the coast on the Ægean. The territory of Croesus was withal so compact, and so well defended, on every side—northwards by the Euxine, on the east by the river Halys, by the Hellespont and Ægean westward, by the heights of the Taurian range on the side of Cilicia,—that it seemed destined to long endurance and prosperity, and would probably have become consolidated into a substantive and powerful kingdom for the heirs of Croesus, had such survived, but for the ambition which tempted his arms eastward to a contest with Cyrus, and the unsettled and conflicting element of the Grecian tribes on the coast, who were ever impatient of an Asiatic master. Its monarch had reached, up to a certain point of his history, the consummation of his highest wishes; the very climax, as he esteemed, and as all who knew him, deemed also, of human felicity. No rival state, within the Halys and Mount Taurus, remained to contest his sovereignty, or excite his envy. His palace at Sardis, itself a citadel, contained chambers filled to the ceiling with gold; such as raised the

marvel, though they won not the gratulation, of his Athenian visitant, the celebrated Solon; and the fame of which, probably, raised thoughts less friendly to his fortunes, in the halls of Persepolis, among the generals and courtiers of Cyrus. But no permanency was given by events to his felicity. Misfortune came upon his house in stroke upon stroke. Of his two sons, one perished accidentally in the boar hunt, by the hand of a fugitive whom he had sheltered, and welcomed to his table; and the other was speechless, though not an idiot. But the consummation came from the new power, which had arisen in the east, on the ruins of Assyria.

The ambition of Cyrus knew no limit. Not content to hold undisputed rule over the whole of the ancient empire of Assyria, from Parthia to the Mediterranean, and from Mount Taurus to the cataracts of the Nile, he determined to make the rich kingdom of Croesus his own, and to add the noble provinces, and Greek states of Asia Minor, to the ancient empire, which Nineveh and Babylon had acquired and consolidated. And the event followed his wishes. In his expedition against Croesus, 546 B.C., the armies of the latter were routed by the disciplined cavalry and archers of Persia; Croesus himself was taken prisoner, and his untold treasure captured, and much of it divided by the profuse generosity of the conqueror, among his Persian satraps and soldiers. Sardis and the chief cities of the interior speedily surrendered to Cyrus; and his general Harpagus, the officer, according to Herodotus, who had, though unintentionally, saved his young master's life, and thus under Providence had preserved him to this destiny, completed, in the following year, the conquest and subjugation of the Greek towns and islands. The life of Croesus was spared, and after a while he was received into high favour and esteem by Cyrus; for he was gifted in no common degree with sagacity and a meditative wisdom; and his experience of the mutability of fortune would seem not to have tinctured his feelings with bitterness and envy, even towards his conquerors. He became a constant and honoured guest at the table of the Persian monarch; and Cyrus habitually availed himself of his counsels and friendship.

An interval of ten years now ensues in the life and reign of Cyrus, during which he was occupied in the administration of his wide empire, and extending his conquests on the east of

Media. Towards the end of this interval, that revolt of the Babylonians under their governor Nabonadius took place, which led to the second capture of the city by Cyrus, and the commencement of its final desolation, according to the warnings of prophecy. This was the capture effected, B.C. 536, by means of the diversion of the Euphrates from its ancient channel, and which, in its chief agent and special circumstances, had been so distinctly foretold by Isaiah, more than two centuries before it came to pass. Cyrus now took possession of the city as his own by conquest, and abandoned it to all the usages of war. The inhabitants, in great numbers, were put to the sword, and thousands of those who survived were reduced to slavery, or driven to exile; while their habitations and treasures became the possession of their Persian conquerors. Now was the time for the truth of prophecy, and the hope of deliverance, to arise anew, in the thoughts and prayers of that stranger race, which had been distributed under different governors, and located in Babylon and Susa, and whom the oppressions and embittered existence of half-a-century, under the dynasty of Nimrod's race, had taught reflection, and a mournful penitence, mingled with a faintness of trust and hope, in the view of their own prospects, which no change of political events, till this sudden catastrophe of the fall of Babylon, had occurred to re-animate. But now, at least, the *power which had trampled on them was no more.*

The grandson of the conqueror, who had dragged them, or their fathers, from their loved country, had been slain in the moment of his most impious outrage on their religion. The accession of Darius ensued; and, while through the influence of the prophet Daniel, it may have resulted in some alleviation of their condition, it opened not the faintest prospect of their deliverance. The province of Babylon was committed anew to a Babylonian; and their Babylonian masters throughout the vast city, or in the villages along the river and the canals, held them still in strict subjection as prisoners of war, who had no rights, nor laws, nor avengers. But the revolt of Nabonadius brought on the sudden fall of, not only the Babylonian government, but the *Babylonian people.* Whatever of cruelty and degradation, of outrage and slaughter, this proud ancient race, fetching its antiquity as a dominant people from the times of the Deluge, had perpetrated on nations around them, and especially

on the dwellers of Palestine, and on the last remnant tribes in the siege cooped up in Jerusalem, came now in a tide of disaster and bloodshed on the princely and despotic families of the Babylonians. No mercy was shown them. They were caught unarmed, unsuspecting of danger, in the hour of relaxation and festivity; and the slaughter went on in different quarters of the city, without even the knowledge in any one miserable quarter, that the same bloodshed was enacted in every other. It was impossible, then, but that the captives of these Babylonian lords should have been struck with astonishment at so sudden a reverse, and so irrecoverable a fall and ruin. They knew that such a fate had been unambiguously denounced on Babylon, in the scroll written by the sublimest of their prophets; but they saw not, none *could* have seen, the possibility of its becoming fact, till the *very moment* of its occurrence. How should they, except in a spirit of implicit faith in their own oracles, when they glanced to the impregnable fortifications which encompassed Babylon, within whose secure height and frowning battlements, defended by thousands of warriors, the Babylonians were defiantly exulting and feasting;—how should any of them presage the mighty city's capture, and the nation's fall? But the event suddenly realized all that prophecy had menaced; and thus *one part* of its predictions having been brought to pass, the captives of Judah might feel encouraged to scrutinize, more hopefully, whatever hints there were given, casting a light on their own *further* fate.

*And such intimations existed;* which the conquest of Babylon by the Persian king, served at once to interpret, and to unfold in their further bearings. The moment they heard, whether dwelling in Babylon, or in its vicinity, that the mighty river had been turned from its course; that the squadrons of the Persian army had stolen at midnight along its channel, into the heart of the city, while its guards, in silence and fancied security, paced its battlements, casting their glance eastward for the dawn; that the city was captured, and that the wail of its agony and slaughter rose to the sky, intermingled with the shouts of the victors; and lastly, that the conqueror's name was *Cyrus*; he, of whom the Lord's prophet had expressly spoken—when the whole of this fact had become understood by them, *very much more* became instantly intelligible, of hopeful prophecy along with it; and the dawn of their own better prospect, from this point, broke forth.

and brightened. They instantly began to compute the years of their desolation; and though they might fail to determine the precise event from which the term of their bondage might be dated; whether, from the first capture of Jerusalem, in the year 604, when a number of their chief nobility and youths only, had been removed to Babylon, but the mass of the population left; or whether, from the second and more disastrous capture of their holy city, and its utter destruction sixteen years later, in B.C. 588, when the chief part of the tribes were dragged to bondage; they could infer, by either reckoning, that the day of their freedom could not be distant. *That day was in fact already come.* The seventy years, in the Divine purposes, had commenced with the *former* date, when Daniel, Ezekiel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, with many others of the chiefs of Israel, had been forced to quit for ever the valleys of Palestine; and the prophetic term of years was at this very period reached, as the singular event itself told them, which soon followed the capture and fall of the city of the oppressor.

This event was no other than the unexampled decision of their new master, to set their whole nation free, to restore them to their own land, and to re-establish them as a people in their ancient possessions in Judea. It was in the course of the very year, in which Cyrus captured Babylon, and thus made *Persia the supreme empire of the East*, that Cyrus issued an edict, not only liberating the captives of Judah and Benjamin from servile degradation, but giving permission and even command for their return to Judea. This was the first year of Cyrus' sole supremacy, after the death of his uncle Darius, and since the acquisition of the Assyrian capital; and he lost no time in inaugurating his grander sovereignty, by the decree of Judah's freedom. Such a decision, we have said, was without example in history. To part with a whole nation, which had shown no symptom of meditated insurrection, nor, in its dispersed allotment, distributed among innumerable masters, had any chance of union for such attempt, was a sacrifice of incalculable value, in the toil and energy abstracted from the culture of the fields, or the public works of the empire. Even if the well-known generosity of Cyrus' temper had disposed him to mitigate the servitude of an industrious people, who had now become inured to their lot, and even so reconciled to exile as to be reluctant to quit the plains

of Shinar, no *political consideration* could have prompted him to free them altogether, and re-establish them as a reunited people in their own borders.

Such a solution is nowhere hinted by prophecy; neither has it any support in the terms of the edict itself, which tacitly, in a manner, disavows every motive but one, a reverence for the authority of the true God. This decision of the Persian conqueror we deem, in a degree, a moral miracle; in other words, we think it would not have been formed, if his mind had not been secretly and irresistibly swayed thereto, by an influence exerted from the unseen world. Let the decree itself be examined and meditated, which Cyrus, a few months after he had taken possession of Babylon, with all its palaces and treasures, issued forth in the behoof of a people, who had become despicable and hopeless, through the long slavery of seventy years. This decree expressly recognises the providence and rule of the God of Israel, and that the last conquests of Persia had been acquired under a Divine destination; and though it may be said, that such a conviction, however wrought on the Persian sovereign's mind, would of itself account for his present decision, we greatly doubt this, unless there were superadded to it a preternatural influence. Not that we need raise the question here, whether Cyrus became a truly renewed character, converted from heathenism to the oracles of revelation, and a devout worshipper of Jehovah. No judgment, we think, can be offered to this extent. But still we maintain the high probability of such influence, and that preternatural, or in excess of the natural workings of his own thoughts, even with the knowledge of prophecy communicated to him, as should constrain him to emancipate a nation, and to replace it in its former position of security and independence. This Cyrus did. Here follow the words of his memorable decree.

"Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia: The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God!) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides

the free-will offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem" (Ezra, i. 2-4). Thus the monarch, conqueror of Asia, and of the then civilized world, expressly refers his decision to the Divine command, and ascribes his own successes to the Divine permission. Such knowledge of the intentions of Heaven in his favour, and, through his instrumentality, in favour of the chosen race, now dispersed in captivity, was doubtless acquired through intercourse with the prophets of the Most High, whose wisdom and integrity had made their name famous in the Babylonian palace, and given them access to the sovereigns both of Babylon and Persia. God in his goodness to his people, even whilst enduring his frown and chastisement in their captivity, withdrew not the oracles of his former revelations, nor discontinued the succession of living prophets, who should be bearers of his messages to their forlorn hearts. This fact is most remarkable in this stage and crisis of the Divine dispensations towards this very people, who were driven by their crimes to captivity.

Moses, in predicting such a calamity as the punishment of their crimes, intimated no such reserve or mitigation in the Divine judgment as the perpetuity of prophecy, to survive through the age of their exile, and to continue even to their full restoration and re-establishment in the land of their possession. But so it was. The lamp of prophecy shone bright, and was again and again re-lighted, in the plain of Shinar, and along the banks of the river Chebar; and thus cheered the else hopeless gloom of seventy years' exile, and told the homeless race they were not forgotten, nor finally forsaken of the God of their fathers. An illustrious succession of prophets arose in this scene, and during this epoch of the captivity and restoration, whose illumination, and the scope of whose anticipations, were not surpassed in the most illustrious times of the monarchy of Judah. Daniel and Ezekiel were prophets of the captivity, and were closely followed by Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, prophets of the restoration; and doubtless the first-named of these holy men had placed under the eye of Cyrus, that strange scroll of Judah's ancient prophets, which had anticipated his career, had sounded the triumph of his last conquest over Babylon, and had even uttered his very name. The Persian soldier yielded his sincere and full faith to the inspiration of these; and awe-struck by such a revelation from the one, infinite, unseen God, bowed himself



before him in worship, and acknowledged his resistless sovereignty and disposal. But beyond this, he was specially influenced to a further decision, and prepared himself to fulfil the Divine behests in favour of the captive tribes located around Babylon. Hence, and hence alone, the issuing of the Decree; or rather, let us add, what is told us in the very terms of Scripture: "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying," etc. (Ezra i. 1.)

The issue of this movement we know. The mass of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin in captivity rose with one heart, to the number of 42,000, and prepared themselves for their journey westward towards the Jordan. The chief part of them had never seen that stream, nor the holy city of their fathers. They were a younger generation; children literally of the captivity, whose birthplace and home had been Babylon or Susa; and whom faith, in great degree, and national patriotism, not the associations of a fondly-remembered country, prompted to remove to their fatherland. But there were also a remnant of a more ancient generation; old men of eighty, ninety, and a hundred years of age; who as children, youths, or men, had formed part of the barefooted and chained droves, that had trod the weary distance, from the Jordan to the Euphrates, seventy years before. The old men and matrons, patriarchs, and the chiefs of families, had their honoured place now in the caravans, guarded by squadrons of horse, which conveyed the remnant of Judah homewards. It is our design to resume, further on, the story of the Jewish restoration in its continuance under successive Persian monarchs. Let it suffice in this place to add, by way of general statement, that their re-establishment as a nation was complete; that their temple was rebuilt and consecrated anew, under Divine auspices, and the promise of a richer glory; that their city rose again from its ruins, and was girt with fortifications against their envious neighbours; that gradually, their villages were re-peopled, and fields cultivated; and, in a word, that the nation anew spread out to its ancient borders, and became so powerful and prosperous, as to continue a career of five centuries longer, steadily adhering, though amid vicissitude and conflict, to the worship of the true God, and increasing in wealth and resources, down to the very times of the advent of Messiah.

Thus the *continuity of the Divine dispensations* and oracles in the land of promise was secured, and the political existence of the chosen race guarded, to the times of the unfolding of the last dispensation, in the advent and teachings of the Son of God, for its rejection of whom it was again cast forth, to wander for centuries in all lands to the present hour. Only let the fact be remembered, that for these five centuries of its second, or resumed history, and for all the religious conditions and results, involved in its re-establishment, the Jewish race was indebted, under the guiding impulse of Heaven, to the solitary decision of the Persian monarch.

Having thus briefly traced the result of that decision, in Jewish story, which was made known and effected in the very year of the capture of Babylon, we shall now proceed to trace the wider extension of the Persian empire, till it came into collision with Europe; and to exhibit the consequences of that great conflict in the summoning into action the energy of Greece, and the creation of the Athenian empire, and Athenian grandeur and enterprise. We shall, then, in briefest outline, give the successive reigns of the monarchy of Persia, from Cyrus down to Darius Hystaspes, and his son Xerxes, whose defeats compelled Persia to withdraw from the contest with Greece; which will prepare the reader for estimating the results of the Persian conflict, both moral and political, on the states of Greece. A similar summary of the Persian reigns, from Xerxes to Darius Codomanus, will conduct us to the fall of the second monarchy of the world before the arms of Alexander, and the succession of the third still vaster empire, though soon broken in its unity, that of the Macedonian kingdom.

The reign of Cyrus, dated from his first accession to the Persian throne, B.C. 559, to the capture of Babylon when the Persian sovereignty became complete over Asia, 536 B.C., was twenty-three years, and the great monarch's age at this latter date was about sixty-three. In such references, we give, of course, but conjectural and approximate numbers, following what appears to be the most probable chronology, given us amid conflicting traditions and accounts. Cyrus lived seven years longer, to the year 529 B.C.; and from this date it is, and not before, that the chronology of Persia, and also of Greece, becomes clear and certain. In these seven years, as sole monarch of the Eastern

world, he devoted much energy and wisdom to the regulation of the empire ; and while resolute to quell resistance in any quarter, his rule was beneficent and mild ; insomuch that his name, after his death, was revered in the East as the father of his people. His armies were chiefly occupied in keeping under the Egyptian insurgents, and in guarding his frontier on the side towards India.

On the north dwelt a fierce people, the Massagetæ, wild Scythian tribes, under the rule, of a warlike queen, named Tomyris. Cyrus was impatient of the pretensions, or resented the undaunted bearing, of this people ; and resolved on an expedition against them. In the spring of 529 B.C., he quitted Persepolis, at the head of his squadrons, and left his two sons, Cambyses and Smerdis, in some degree to the care and good counsel of Croesus, his guest and friend, the former king of Lydia. The expedition was fatal to the Persian monarch. He rashly crossed the river, which bounded the Scythian kingdom, with his troops ; and fighting at disadvantage with the Scythians, was slain in battle, and his troops bore his body back for burial in the royal tomb at Pasargadæ. Such was the end of the great prince, whose word had given freedom, and a second national existence, to the chosen race, and whose name and appearance in history had been, on this special account, a theme for prophecy. His successors will not equally detain us.

Cambyses his son followed him on the throne, B.C. 529 ; a prince of ungovernable passions, whose crimes admit of alleviation, only by the supposition of madness, which was generally deemed to be the fact. He murdered his brother Smerdis ; he murdered his wife and sister ; he murdered the young son of his chief officer ; he attempted to murder Croesus his faithful adviser ; and in his expedition into Egypt, he perpetrated the direst cruelties against the ruling king and his nobles, and against the inhabitants of Memphis. He died B.C. 522, after a reign of seven years ; and the family of Cyrus being now extinct, with the exception of his daughter Atossa, Darius Hystaspes, after a brief attempt made by Smerdis the Magian, to simulate the character of Smerdis, the younger son of Cyrus, and to assume the government, was by the concurrence of the six other Persian nobles, who conspired against the impostor, raised to the throne of Persia 521 B.C. He married Atossa, who became afterwards the mother

of Xerxes, and thus in the female line the race of Cyrus was perpetuated to the very fall of the Persian empire. Darius held with firm grasp the entire empire united under the sceptre of the great Cyrus. The earliest measures of Darius related to the financial system of the whole empire, from India to Egypt and the Hellespont. For the first time, an assessment was arranged, which comprehended every kingdom and province, with the exception of the Persians; for these were not taxed, but brought their contributions in gifts, according to their ancient usage. The gold dust of India, the horses of Cappadocia, the myrrh, frankincense, and cinnamon of Arabia, the ivory of Nubia, and the coined money of Egypt and Syria and Asia Minor—all were determined, in the amount to be levied, in each country.

Thus Persia, besides making her rule felt throughout the extent of an empire so wide, and amalgamating the nations into a single allegiance, from Asia Minor to India, gathered to herself, by a systematic and unresisted exaction, the riches of all the East; and the wealth amassed annually by Darius, enabled him to maintain his armies with ease, and to increase the number of his forces, as a permanent and trained armament, to an extent probably beyond any previous example. It was this unlimited command of the wealth of so vast an empire, extorted on system by a taxation from which the humane Cyrus had refrained, together with the possession of a military force which held all Asia in awe, that tempted the thoughts of Darius further west, and made him ask himself, whether it was not possible to add the rich countries beyond the Hellespont to his dominions, and thus subject the rising civilization of Europe to Asiatic rule. His armies were speedily put in motion, and assembled near the narrow strait of the Dardanelles. They crossed over into Thrace, and easily made acquisition of Thrace, and Macedonia, and the greater part of Thessaly. After these conquests over the fierce and rude tribes on the north of Greece, the subjugation of the remaining smaller, but more cultivated states of southern Greece, from the pass of Thermopylæ to Cape Malea, seemed an easy enterprise. The wealth of Persia was boundless; her armies were to be reckoned by hundreds of thousands; and by this time, in consequence of the subjugation of the maritime cities and islands of the Ægean, Persia had gained command of nearly the whole marine of the Mediterranean.

The memorable expedition against Greece proper was resolved on by Darius, partly in revenge for the aid given by the Athenians to Miletus, and the burning of the royal palace at Sardis, and partly on the pretence of restoring Hippias, the eldest son of Pisistratus, to the position held by his father as tyrant of Athens. The event of this much dreaded invasion is well known. On the plains of Marathon, a small force of 10,000 Athenians, under Miltiades, joined alone by 1,000 Platæans, rushed down like an avalanche on the embattled thousands of Persian warriors formed in crowded ranks on the lower ground, broke their lines, slaughtered them by thousands, and forced the speedy retreat of the remainder into their ships, which were anchored near the shore. This was in the year B.C. 490. Darius was more provoked than dejected by this repulse, and resolved to make preparations on a wider scale, and to launch the whole force of the East on these small frontier states of Europe. He died in the midst of these plans, B.C. 485, and committed their execution to Xerxes, who succeeded him on the throne. The magnitude of the armament assembled by Xerxes, filled all Greece with apprehension and dismay. Probably not far from a million troops crossed over the bridge of boats at Abydos, under the command of the great king and his generals, and advanced by steady marches across Thrace and Macedonia into Thessaly; while the fleets collected from the various ports of Asia Minor, Rhodes, and Egypt, slowly advanced at no great distance, along the shore. Athens was at this time joined by Sparta, and the smaller states south of Mount Cæta; and it was determined to contest with the Persians under Mardonius, the pass of Thermopylæ. Leonidas and the brave 300 Spartans under his orders, repulsed every successive onset made at this pass; and they were at last only overpowered and slain, on the ground where they maintained their stand, by the attack of thousands on their rear, who had made the ascent over the ridges of Mount Cæta by another mountain pass. The Persian armies under Xerxes and his general Mardonius, now poured into the plains of Boœtia, and pushed forward towards Athens. But Athens was a pile of burnt ruins, and its whole population departed. At the urgent remonstrance of Themistocles, they had set fire to their wood-built dwellings, had embarked on board their shipping, and removed with their families to Salamis.

The naval fight in Salamis was the next event of the war, in

which the Persian fleet was utterly broken and wrecked, with the exception of a few ships; and the corpses of Persian warriors, to use the terrific allusion of *Æschylus*, himself engaged in this conflict, as before at *Marathon*, were tossed and floated in the restless depths around the rocky shore. This victory, so immortal in history, took place B.C. 480, just ten years after the battle of *Marathon*. *Xerxes* had watched the struggle from the shore, and beheld the ruin of his fleet. The swiftest galleys that escaped in the fight, hastened towards the *Hellespont* to secure the bridges for the return of *Xerxes*. The Persian monarch retreated with a large escort through *Thessaly*, and *Thrace*, and thence on to *Sardis*, where his mother *Atossa*, *Cyrus'* daughter, had confidently awaited far other tidings than had already preceded his arrival. But the Persian army still held possession of Greece from *Cape Sunium* to the rocky passes of *Corinth*; and *Mardonius*, with his hundreds of thousands of disciplined troops, might yet confidently promise his sovereign the eventual subjugation of the Greek race. The preparations of *Aristides* and *Themistocles*, with the Athenians and brave *Platæans* under their command, and of *Pausanias* with the armies of *Sparta* and *Corinth*, were completed in the spring of the following year, after the victory of *Salamis*. They assembled their united force in the plain of *Platæa*, at the base of *Mount Cithæron*, with the *Asopus* flowing in front of them. After various manœuvres to draw them from their position, the attack of the Persian host commenced; and it was repulsed by the Greeks with undaunted bravery; till at last the whole array of *Mardonius* was broken, and thrown into confusion, and the Greeks rushed upon them with irresistible force. The Persians fell on the plain by thousands, *Mardonius* himself was slain, and the surviving squadrons of his army retreated in disorder, and pushed their way homewards, leaving their camp and treasures as a spoil to the victors. Then first the Greeks beheld proofs of the wealth of *Persia*, in the costly tents of silk and embroidery, and in the vessels of gold and silver, belonging to *Xerxes'* generals. The victory was complete; the repulse of *Asia* a final one. Of the surviving thousands after the battle, many perished in their retreat through *Thrace*; and the rest re-crossed the *Hellespont*, worn down with fatigue and wounds. The conviction at last was brought home to the mind of *Xerxes*, that he must no longer

dream of European conquest, but must take measures to guard well the limits of his empire at its Asiatic extreme on the *Ægean*. He and his mother withdrew in sullenness and fear from Sardis, and retired to their distant eastern capital of Persepolis.

Thus Greece was freed, and not only Greece, but Europe. Persia withdrew her army from Macedonia, Thrace, and the Chersonesus; and Byzantium, which commanded the straits of the Pontic Sea, was soon in the possession of an Athenian garrison. Not till near two thousand years were past, did an Asiatic army, except as occasional allies in Greek or Roman wars, venture again on the soil of Europe. In 1453, the Ottomans from northern Asia, descendants probably of that Scythian race among whom Cyrus lost his life, assaulted and captured Constantinople, and conquered Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, Illyricum, Moesia, and Dacia; and to this day still hold the greater part of their conquests. But for five centuries anterior to the Christian era, and for fifteen centuries subsequent, the repulse of Persia by Athens and the other states of Greece, terminated the contest of Asia with Europe, and averted from the rising civilization of the West, the blasting influence of Eastern despotism, of Eastern habits of thought, and of Eastern debasement.

We have dwelt the more fully on this struggle of Persia with Greece, and its issue, in the first twenty years of the fifth century before Christ, because it constitutes in truth the very crisis, in ancient history, of the destiny of Europe and the world through all future ages; and it led to results, both in the fortunes of Persia and of Greece, which form important epochs in the history of each. Had Persia prevailed in her attempt to enslave the Greek states of Attica, Corinth, and Sparta, as she had subjugated the Greek colonies of Asia Minor, and had already prevailed against Thrace, Macedon, and Thessaly—and with her overwhelming force and resources, what in all human calculation could appear to promise the contrary?—how different would have been the world's history, apart from the purposes of an overruling Providence, for all ages to come! The light of Greece would have been extinguished at its kindling; its poetry, philosophy, and eloquence would have had no being; the example of its courage, the wisdom of its politics, would have been lost to the world; and corruption in its basest forms, together with a general degradation of manners,

and a consequent debility of intellect, would have characterized eastern Europe, and reduced it to a uniformity and dead level of humiliation, similar to that of the Chinese empire. All of subsequent history would have had to be differently written; nor was it improbable, if Persia had succeeded in stretching her empire to the Adriatic, that she would have crushed with equal success the small Roman state, at this time fighting its first battles for existence with Etruria, the Æquians, and the Volscians. It is difficult to the imagination even, to represent as possible, *after the event*, the contrary of the fact and reality, which we know to *have* been; and yet the supposition we have made, is no other than that which the Ottoman force actually realized, against a seemingly far mightier empire than the combined states of Greece, in the conquest of Constantinople, and the permanent hold of a vast empire in Europe to this day. And all the humiliation, debasement, and wrong, which Persian victories would have entailed in the fifth century before the Christian era, the dominion of the Turk has perpetuated over these very lands of southern Europe, since the fall of that capital of the Roman empire, which Constantine raised on the site of ancient Byzantium.

But let us now go back to Persia, and to the epoch of its defeat. Xerxes made no effort to repeat his attack. He was disabled at once on the sea and on land. On the very day on which Mardonius was defeated at Platæa, by the forces under Aristides and Pausanias, was fought the sea-fight off Mycale, a mountain headland in Ionia, in which the Athenian fleet, combined with that of Sparta, utterly defeated and ruined the naval armament of Persia; so that Persia but rarely in succeeding years risked her fleet in a contest with Athens. Once more she did so, ten years after the battle of Mycale, in the final engagement near the Eurymedon in Pamphylia; when the Athenian general Cimon, the heroic son of Miltiades, destroyed the Persian ships, and, landing his forces, attacked and routed the Persian army on the shore. This was the last, or nearly the last appearance of a Persian fleet, in any independent enterprise, in the Mediterranean. Yet was Persia still a vast and powerful empire on its own Asiatic ground; and, for a century and a half longer, after her European defeats, her sovereignty over Asia, together with Egypt, from Ethiopia to the Indus, and even beyond the Indus, remained undisputed. The Persian monarchs reigned in splendour and



luxury, in their eastern capitals, Ecbatana, Persepolis, or Pasargadæ; and it must be said of them, that their rule, in its general tenor and spirit, was totally different from that of Assyria or Babylon. It was more humane in its character, more intelligent and wise in its aim, more equal in its administration of distant provinces, and more indulgent and tolerant to freedom of thought in religion.

Evidently the period of Persian supremacy, from the reign of the elder Cyrus to the fall of the empire was one of advance in the history of Asia; as it was also, in great degree, one of repose throughout its Asiatic dominions. The surges of war broke, in those ages, on Europe, or in vain struggles with its power; while Asia, as regarded all intestine division or warfare, enjoyed a state of profound rest it had never before known, since the first conquests of Assyria. The Persian rule partook throughout of a more generous temperament, than that of Assyria. It inherited the humanity infused into it by its great founder; it never, at least, became the crushing tyranny which Egypt and Assyria and Babylon had each been to their conquered subjects. Persia rarely made slaves of those whom it reduced to submission. This, of course, is spoken of it generally, and in comparison with other ancient monarchies. It cannot be denied, we think, that the general impression given to the mind, of the Persian supremacy as a whole, is one, not only of a dazzling magnificence, but of intelligence, and benignity, blended with power, such as rather tempts the imagination to its contemplation, than revolts the mind, as the preceding empires do, from their remembrance.

This view of the Persian government leads our thoughts naturally to its continued treatment of that once captive race, whom Cyrus had restored to their own land; where we shall see in their history, the best exemplification of the humanity we have ascribed to it. And, as a general statement, we may remark, that the condition of the restored tribes under the Persian sovereignty was eminently prosperous and happy. They needed, as an infant state recommencing their history, repose, security, and indulgence; and these they obtained under the shadow of the Persian monarchy. For the space of two hundred years after their return in 536 B.C., to the very hour of the fall of Persia, 331 B.C., the small Jewish kingdom enjoyed perfect rest, and, in effect, a nearly perfect independence. The protection of the great second

empire of the world shielded it from molestation from its neighbours; from the Samaritans, from the Idumeans, from Egypt; and it would seem also, that through the especial favour of successive princes, the contributions levied from Judea were exceedingly light, if indeed at any time more than a nominal tribute. It was permitted to have, from the first, its own native prince as its ruler, to re-establish its own laws and usages, to re-erect its temple to the living God, and to raise strong fortifications around its capital. Its religion was never persecuted or interfered with by Persia, as became the case under the usurpation of Antiochus in a later period, nor were the taxes so heavy as afterwards, when Judea passed under the rule of the Ptolemies. These two centuries in Jewish history are in great degree veiled in obscurity, and but faintly and occasionally irradiated, the first part, by the later gleams of inspired history in Ezra and Nehemiah, and the second, by allusions in the Apocryphal books. But there is certainty that such obscurity, was the obscurity of peace, progress, and content; inasmuch as we see the nation, in the moment when it emerges into history anew, become a powerful people, capable of maintaining the struggle under the Maccabees with heroism and success, against the terrific invasions of Syria under Antiochus Epiphanes.

A brief thread of the intertwined history of Persia and Judea, after the restoration, may be traced, by blending the references of the very last chapters of sacred history, in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, with the successive reigns of the Persian monarchs, after the death of Cyrus. On account of the seemingly dispersed order of these portions of inspired history in the sacred canon, or rather perhaps because they consist chiefly of brief sketches, intermixed with much genealogy, and incidental arrangement, these books draw to themselves much less attention than other, even historical, parts of the ancient canon; although, as authentic and inspired accounts of Judah after the restoration, they are invaluable, and even their genealogies, though mere catalogues of names, historically, above all price. These last books of sacred history are to the captivity, what the books of Joshua and the Judges of Israel are to the mission of Moses, and the sojourn of Israel in Egypt, and in the wilderness. They picture, and relate the sequel of Israel's story, after its times of galling oppression, and deferred hope. They attest in each case the fulfilment, his-

torically, of the promise of God, and the predictions of his prophets.

As we behold with devout complacence of heart the picture of a prosperous people and kingdom realized in Canaan, in conformity to God's ancient covenant with his servant Abraham, and his commission to Moses; so in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, considered as history, and as the infallible statement of fact, we have *the promise and sequel fulfilled*, which Isaiah and Jeremiah had predicted. Wanting these books in Scripture, as authentic record given under inspired guidance, we should have missed an inspired attestation of an indispensable and concluding part of the Divine dispensations, anterior to the Christian era. It might have been sought for, it is true, in the Apocryphal books, and the general traditions of Jewish history; and its reality could not be brought in question. But still there is a felt completeness and beauty of provision, in having *this part also*, by means of Ezra and his contemporaries, included in the compass of an inspired and infallible record, and the seal of the Divine direction and truth set upon its pages. Such are the conditions under which we have attested to us, the restoration from the captivity, the rebuilding of the temple, and the revival of its holy service to Jehovah, to be perpetuated, till the time when the Desire of all nations should come, and the Lord himself, the Messenger of the covenant, should enter its precincts. Let not, then, these books of revelation be thought lightly of by the Christian student. Their statement as history presents the counterpart and fulfilment of prophecy, so full of bliss and hope to a people long familiar with exile and servitude; and their very genealogies, so apparently superfluous and tiresome to read, are the golden links of a chain of evidence which connects the ancient dispensations of the Scriptures with the story of Messiah's descent and roign as the son of David, and the promised seed of Abraham. For these lengthened remarks on the sacred books referred to, we think no apology to be needed. The little attention ordinarily given to them, seemed to us, in a review like the present, to call for some distinct, though necessarily rapid account, of their design and place in the sacred canon, and an assertion, however unequal to their claims, of their unspeakable worth as the *inspired conclusion of ancient sacred history*. We now proceed with the sketch which gave occasion to these comments, and in which we have briefly to embody this

conclusion of the Scripture narrative, in respect of the condition of the Jews, with the reigns of the successive Persian monarchs, under whose administration, or rather by whose appointed instrumentality, this part of their history was unfolded.

After the decree for the restoration of Judah, and the rebuilding of the temple, we hear no more in the Scripture narrative of the reign of Cyrus. The Jews returned, that is, the mass of the captive tribes; for a great proportion remained in the districts around Babylon, or Susa, preferring the home of their birth to the land of their fathers, and thus perpetuating, in Babylon, a settlement of true worshippers of God, in the centre of the eastern empire. These Jews of Babylon maintained their steadfastness in religion through every succeeding century, and cultivated the most affectionate union with their brethren of Judea; numbers of them annually visiting the holy city, and taking part with devout enthusiasm in the holy services of the temple, at the great annual festivals of the Passover and the Pentecost. They were ever ready and eager to assist their brethren when in distress, or involved in persecution. They continued in Babylon to the times of the Christian era. Thousands of them became converts to the Christian faith, under the preaching of the apostles, probably St. Peter and St. Thomas; and there was doubtless a church of the Lord Jesus Christ at Babylon, that ancient capital, whither their fathers had been dragged as captives, though now the city was falling fast into decay. But a large portion continued unbelievers, and maintained the inveterate hostility, which at last became characteristic of the whole race, towards the Christian faith. Hence, when the Emperor Julian, 361 A D, made his attempt to rebuild Jerusalem, and generally to depress Christianity throughout the Roman empire, his enthusiastic allies in the East were the Jews of Babylon, whose numbers had been largely recruited, in consequence of the dispersion of their Judean brethren by the decree of Adrian A.D. 135; and from Babylon were supplied the eager thousands, who took part in the vain project of rebuilding the temple. Such, in brief, was the history of the descendants of that remnant, which in Cyrus' time continued in the Persian empire.

The rebuilding of the temple was commenced, immediately after the return of the chief part of the nation under Zerubbabel and Joshua; but the work was soon suspended, in consequence of the hostile interference and representations of surrounding

nations, descendants of the ancient foes of Judah, and bitter opponents to the re-establishment of their former rivals. Their representations would seem to have succeeded in unsettling Cyrus' purpose; though had he lived, he would doubtless have rendered full justice to the interests of the race, whom his generosity had emancipated, and would have given orders to carry out completely his former decree. But he became occupied in the preparations for his Scythian expedition, and his death took place in that war, in 529 B.C., being about seven years after the issuing of his decree. The reign of Cambyses, his furious son, followed, which extended over another interval of seven years; during which the rebuilding of the temple was still delayed. In 522 B.C., after the seven months' usurpation of the impostor Smerdis the Magian, Darius Hystaspes was raised to the throne of Cyrus; and it is this Darius, who in Ezra's narrative, appears as the second restorer of Jerusalem. It was he, about the year 520 B.C., who re-announced and confirmed the decree of Cyrus. Daniel was probably now no more, who had been the counsellor and friend of the first Darius, Cyaxares the Mede, the uncle of Cyrus, and who doubtless had shared the acquaintance and regard of the younger Persian hero himself. He probably did not survive many years after the final capture of Babylon, as his age would have been verging towards ninety at that date; being a youth, approaching to manhood, when, seventy years before, he accompanied Jehoiachin and Ezekiel and others into captivity. At least his allusions contain no reference to any reign later than that of Cyrus. His few dates of reference, which it is of some interest to trace, are, the third year of Jehoiachin king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem, B.C. 607; the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; the first year of Belshazzar, and again the third year of the same king; the first year of Darius the Mede; and lastly, the third year of Cyrus king of Persia. Daniel had, under Divine direction, discerned the true period of the seventy years indicated by Jeremiah, and had in consequence given himself to earnest prayer for the restoration of his people; which prayer, preserved in his writings, was forthwith answered by the issuing of Cyrus' decree. But, probably, soon after the proclamation, and before the fulfilment of the event, the aged saint and prophet, who had beheld the falling fortunes and final catastrophe of the Assyrian

empire, fell asleep in death; otherwise his name would have been prominent among the princes and leaders of the returned people; and the like may also be said of the prophet Ezekiel.

The next reference is supplied by Ezra, who expressly names Darius the king of Persia, as giving the second decree for rebuilding the temple; and in the sixth year of his reign, the temple was finished and consecrated. The reign of this Darius Hystaspes is memorable, as we have seen, for his expedition against Greece, and the defeat of his army in the plains of Marathon. After his name, the perplexity begins in the Scripture chronology of the Persian kings, as regards its interpretation into that of Herodotus; and this perplexity solely arises from the fact, that the name Ahasuerus would appear to be used indifferently, as a mere title, for denominating the monarchs of Persia. The doubtful point relates not to the narrative of Ezra, for this writer mentions in succession, first Darius, next Ahasuerus, and next Artaxerxes; therefore there is no question that Artaxerxes is the grandson of Darius, and Ahasuerus another name for Xerxes his son. The only uncertainty is, whether the monarch who raised Esther to the throne, was Xerxes, or Artaxerxes; and the probability, to us, would seem to point to the latter.

Without dwelling on the incidents of the book of Esther, we may remark that both Ezra and Nehemiah stood in high office near the throne, and were highly esteemed by Artaxerxes. In his reign, and by his permission, a second migration took place from among the remaining Jewish families in Babylon, under the direction of Ezra. In the sacred book which bears his name, this inspired historian relates both the first and the second migrations; the first, under Zerubbabel, and Joshua the priest, the account of which occupies the first three chapters of Ezra; and the second, under his own direction, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, by the express commission of the king. The account of the first migration is given with much particularity; dating from the edict of Cyrus, and specifying the names of the chiefs of Judah who embraced its privilege, and the express numbers in the families of each. It gives prominence also to the prince who conducted them, Zerubbabel of the royal house of David, and to Joshua the chief of the house of Aaron, both of whom were chosen under prophetic direction, and encouraged

both in their patriotic mission, and their perseverance against difficulties and opposition. In his seventh chapter, the account commences, of that second migration, headed by Ezra himself, who upon his arrival gave his chief attention to rectify the disorders which had arisen from the intermixture with foreign families. Afterwards, when Nehemiah arrived seven years later, and took charge of the civil government, Ezra devoted himself solely to the regulation of the temple services, and the interpretation of the sacred oracles; an example, from which may be dated the teaching of the synagogues, which afterwards were so greatly multiplied. Meanwhile, the city of Jerusalem was gradually rising from its ruins, and its circuit of habitations enlarged; but it had no defence of walls; and amid the fierce and unsettled tribes around them, envious of their rising greatness—the Samaritans on the north, and the Amalekites on the south, of which race was Haman, who held high command in the Persian army—their situation was one of constant peril and alarm. This state of things lasted through the reign of Xerxes, and till the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, his successor, when Nehemiah obtained permission to rebuild the wall around the city. From this period of security, now given to the capital, the prosperity of the nation rapidly advanced; and as the decree of the Persian monarch generally overawed the neighbouring tribes, the cultivation of the land also, and the restoration of villages and towns in various districts, gradually went forward. This decree of Artaxerxes marks the last notice, in Scripture history, of the Persian monarchy, at a date about 445 B.C.

The succeeding monarchs of Persia to the time of Alexander, for another century later, continued the same favour and patronage to the Jews, now increased to a people, that had been inaugurated by the great founder of their empire. Jewish history from this point is to be traced in the Apocryphal books, or gathered from such traditions as Josephus has put together in his “Antiquities of the Jews.” It consists chiefly of ecclesiastical notices of successive high priests; for those obtained, under the Persian governor of the Syrian province, the chief direction of Jewish affairs, from the times of Ezra and Nehemiah. During the reigns of Darius Nothus, 423 B.C., of Artaxerxes Mnemon, 404 B.C., brother of Cyrus the younger, of Artaxerxes Ochus 359 B.C., of Arsēs 338 B.C., and last of all, of Darius, 336 B.C., with whom the

Persian dynasty ended 331 B.C., the Jews enjoyed uninterrupted repose and prosperity. Their successive high-priests and rulers, throughout this century from Ezra's age, were Eliashib, Judas, and John. Under these national rulers, while the Persian governor rarely interfered in their affairs, the Jews shared at once the advantages of protection and independence; and continued undisturbed, during the whole time that the Persian empire had to maintain its various wars with the states of Athens, Sparta, and last of all, of Macedon.

From the lengthened view we have given of the influence exerted by the Persian monarchy, under the express direction of Providence, on the fortunes of the chosen race, in being the appointed instrument of their re establishment and their second national unity and existence, we now turn to consider the result of its first attack on Greece, and its continuous struggle with the Greek states, after its first humiliating defeats, and definitive repulse from Europe. This result exhibits a phase of general history of much interest, and illustrates the overruling determination of Providence, in respect of the destiny and whole future condition of Europe, if we may not say, the world, in as striking a manner, though not with the same immediate and explicit interference, as in the restoration of the Jewish race.

We have, in a former page, attempted a representation, however imperfectly conceived, of the result which would have followed, in the probable course of events, if Persia had *not* been defeated, but had subjugated Greece, and pushed its conquests westward, over the small states of Europe to Etruria and Rome, south Italy, Sicily, and even Carthage, and Spain, to the Straits of Calpe. There was no improbability of this, if only the frontier states of southern Greece had yielded before the overwhelming inundation of Persian force, as easily as the ruder tribes of Thrace, Macedon, and Thessaly had done. Athens, conquered at Salamis, would have had no force or courage to join Sparta and Corinth, at the base of Mount Cithæron. The Corinthian passes into the Peloponnesus would have been without much difficulty surmounted; and the Helots, with the remnant of the Messenian people, would gladly have sought Persian help against Sparta, and purchased emancipation from cruel bondage, at the price of admitting the foreigner to hold rule. Persia would have become mistress of the sea,



and Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily, and the Greek cities of the Tarentine Gulf, would probably have resisted the Asiatic fleets in vain. In fact, Gelon, the tyrant of Syracuse, reasoned in this very manner on the probabilities of the struggle, and continued in suspense and terror for his own fortunes, till after tidings reached him from Salamis. The single sea-fight of Salamis, as the first condition of ensuing resistance on land, reversed all this prospect; and from the rocks of that small island, Europe may date the beginning of her triumph, and of her independent and mighty destiny in future story. There the strength of Persia was broken, and the possibility of its final defeat made good. For not only did not the adverse consequences, which we have supposed possible, ensue to Europe, but the Persian assault summoned forth the hitherto undisplayed superiority and energy of the European character, and, in particular, of the states chiefly engaged in the struggle. The struggle, as its indirect result, developed the energy and created the empire, first and chiefly of Athens, and then of Sparta and of Thebes.

The almost immediate effect of the victories of Salamis and Plataea, was the creation of the maritime power of Athens, and the formation of a wide political combination of the islands and small states in the Ægean, over which Athens gradually attained complete sovereignty. The necessity immediately arose for this combination, with a view to the defence of these islands, and the maritime Greek towns of Asia Minor; and as Athens had chiefly distinguished herself in the contest with Persia, was possessed of a larger navy, and lay nearest the isles referred to, her claims to be head of the confederacy were at once conceded by the greater number; and soon, the resistance of the few, which disputed her sovereignty, was overpowered by her newly-augmented force. At first, this union of small polities was one of equal alliance, and of contribution to a common fund, which was treasured at the temple of Delos, an island deemed inviolate on religious grounds; while Athens was to hold the command of their united fleet. After a time, pretences were found for removing the treasury from Delos to Athens; and further, by degrees, Athens extorted from her allies the concession, that there should be a right of appeal from the civil courts of each state to the tribunals

of Athens. Thus she became politically the centre of an empire, and the allied states became at length directly tributary, and completely subject to her sway. This was a sudden and singular exaltation, for so small a state as that of Attica, to power, supremacy, and grandeur; and the change acted on the spirit and character of the Athenian people in a manner, on the whole, which greatly elevates their claims to admiration and esteem. This one people met the sudden change and enlargement of their prospects and power, with a development of the higher qualities of intelligence, liberality, and enterprise, which more than equalled such political grandeur, and which survived its decay and departure.

The maritime empire of Athens reached from the Argolic Gulf to the Hellespont, and included nearly all the isles of the *Ægean* Sea. The city, having been rebuilt of stone, was speedily surrounded with fortifications, in spite of the jealousy of Sparta; and the completion of the long walls which connected the city with the Piræus, made the position of Athens impregnable. From this time she maintained an undisputed sovereignty for a period of sixty-four years; and though subsequently her power was humbled in contests with Lacedæmon, she again emerged from the waters, and held her high place among the states of Greece, till all were involved in one common humiliation by the success of Philip of Macedon's artifices and arms. But what is so remarkable is, that Athens chiefly, or in a manner, alone, ran that career of intellectual glory, which has made her influence commensurate with the ages of time. No other state of Greece exhibited the same development. Lacedæmon, when she attained the sovereignty, remained still a simple political force, with scarcely any other attributes attaching to her grandeur, except political judgment, courage, and perseverance. The like may also be said of Thebes, in the period of her ascendancy; though both Thebes and Sparta, and all the states of Greece, partook of the general awakening of thought and spread of intelligence, of which, however, the kindling, brilliant centre was Athens. At Athens arose a succession of statesmen, of orators, of poets, of philosophers, such as few other nations in all time have rivalled; and in this era, and in this single state, were produced those compositions in philosophy, oratory, and poetry, and those works of art, which

became models of thinking, of argument, of fancy, and of imitation, for all future time; and created a new and all-powerful intellectual element in the mental history of the human race, next to the sacred Scriptures, the most important, and the most enduring.

Moreover, the splendour and beauty of the Greek literature became the sure means of spreading the Greek language, and of diffusing the systems and spirit of the Greek philosophy. We say nothing here of the truth or accuracy of such philosophy; but that it represented a new and wonderful phase of intellectual development, and became a new power in the moral world, for all ages, cannot be disputed. Nor is it less certain, that the rise of this era of intellectual grandeur is to be considered as, in a degree, the result of the political grandeur suddenly brought within the reach of Athens; and her political grandeur was the immediate consequence of her heroic defence of Greece at Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa. It may indeed be said, that the simple accession of political sovereignty could not have been the sole cause of such intellectual development at Athens, since Lacedæmon gained for a time equal power, without exhibiting any similar superiority of intellectual enlargement; neither has mere power the tendency to produce such enlargement. We admit the force of this reasoning, in a degree. We admit there may have been some peculiarity, either in the genius of the Athenian people, or in the accidents of their situation, which may have given impulse to their intellectual activity; yet it will be still correct to say, that the circumstances which determined the era of such activity, were those of the triumphs of Athens over Persia, combined with the republican form of her constitution, which also itself was the permanent result of the Persian contest. When the whole population had taken equal part in the struggle, it would have been impossible, after their victories, to establish the rule of any single tyrant, or of any single class.

The defeat of Xerxes' expedition, commanded by Mardonius, put an end to all attempts to reduce European states under Asiatic rule, and terminated the struggle on European ground. But it did not terminate the contest between Persia and Greece. Persia had now to fight for her rule over the Greek states of Asia Minor, which Cyrus had conquered from Croesus; and though

for a long period she was on the whole the victor, her power became continually more precarious. Persia maintained her position chiefly by dividing the union of her enemies. Lacedæmon made war against Athens, and after a time succeeded to her sovereignty in the Ægean. Ultimately, as the result of these contests, the independence of the Greek cities of Asia was formally surrendered to Persia, by the peace of Antalcidas B.C. 384, in the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon, the second Persian monarch after the Artaxerxes, of whom Ezra and Nehemiah make mention. But in the first years of this monarch's reign, there took place an event, which though remote in its date, may be deemed a precursor of the fall of the Persian empire. This was no other than the expedition of his younger brother Cyrus, with an auxiliary Greek force, to wrest the sceptre from the hands of Artaxerxes. The expedition failed through the death of Cyrus, at the battle of Cunaxa, on the Euphrates; but the superiority evinced by the Greeks in the battle, the Asiatics betaking themselves to flight even as the Greeks were advancing; and, after the battle, their stern defiance of the great king, and deliberate retreat northwards to the Euxine, made an impression on Persian armies which was never effaced. After this expedition, and the well-guarded retreat of the ten thousand under Cheirisophus and Xenophon, which the narrative of the latter has so minutely described, Asiatic forces never again faced Europeans with their former confidence. The prestige of Asia, so long the awe of the world, was ruined; and though its numbers made its arrays formidable, Greek warriors came to feel, that their valour and discipline could overbalance almost any odds. The fact of so small a force, entangled amid the canals connecting the Tigris and the Euphrates not forty miles from Babylon, defying the vast force and imperious summons of the great king, and retreating in safety after having penetrated to the centre of the kingdom, revealed the weakness of the Persian empire, in a manner which was not forgotten among the Greeks. After this, in ensuing contests, the power of Persia was ever on the decline; and the expedition of the Ten Thousand, if it did not suggest, at least gave confidence to the daring resolution of Alexander, at a period seventy years later, to attack the Persian throne, and make himself master of the East.

After Artaxerxes Mnemon, who reigned for the long period of forty-five years, and died B.C. 359, his successors on the throne

of Persia were the three monarchs, Artaxerxes Ochus, who reigned twenty-one years, to B.C. 338; Arses, who reigned two years, B.C. 336, and Darius Codomanus, whose troubled reign of five years ended with his defeat at Arbela, and his death afterwards by the hand of one of his generals, B.C. 331, when Alexander of Macedon, and his 30,000 Greeks achieved the conquest of the whole Persian empire. It is not necessary, for the purposes of this volume, to detail the events of these reigns, which comprehend the last period of the Persian monarchy, extending over three parts of a century, from 404 to 331 B.C. It may be said, that the continual implication of Persian policy with the affairs of the Greek states, was the consequence of the Persian empire being pushed to the extreme limit of Asia Minor, in the reign of Cyrus. The Greek states on the coast were ever impatient of Persian rule, and ready for revolt; looking for the natural aid of the states of Greece proper. Even if Persia had not made the direct attempt to enslave Greece, and thus provoked an inextinguishable hostility against it, the collision would have still been inevitable, at the limit where the Eastern empire approached the European populations.

After the great repulse and check which confined Persia to the east of the Hellespont, the struggle was continually renewed, though within a limited range, and with occasional intermissions; and, as a question of force between the Greeks and Persians, the result was always humiliating to the latter. But the wealth of Persia, gathered from her hundred provinces, was for those times enormous; and hence she could still maintain an overwhelming superiority of numbers, which made her power still formidable, and protracted her ascendancy in Asia Minor, as well as prolonged the duration of the whole empire in its integrity. By means of her riches also, Persia long held the balance of the Greek states, giving her aid at one time to Lacedæmon against Athens, and again aiding Athens when her power had been broken by Sparta. Still, as regards the whole effect on Persian power, this perpetual entanglement, and frequent struggle with the Greek states, operated for its weakening and decline; exhausting both the energies and wealth of the empire, and laying bare its weakness to the ambition of Greek generals. Thus, more than half a century before the time of Alexander of Macedon, the Spartan general Agesilaus, having defeated the Persian force opposed to him on the Meander, at one moment, seriously meditated an expedition against the

Persian monarchy at its centre, and would have marched his forces upward towards Babylon without delay, but for an imperative summons to return home for the defence of his own country, now imperilled by the victorious efforts of Thebes, under Epaminondas. Nor is it improbable that he would have succeeded in his attempt, had it been permitted him to make it; and so the fall of Persia might have dated from about 390 B.C., or, some sixty years before the conquests of Alexander.

But anterior to this mighty change in the world's history, which was to take place in the subjugation of Asia, from the Ægean to the Punjaub, to the rule of Europeans, the Greek states were to be successively weakened by contests among themselves, and to be humbled and amalgamated under the single rule of Macedon. We shall afterwards advert to these in reviewing the origin and extension of the Macedonian empire. At present we have to direct attention to the fall and final ruin of the Persian monarchy, in the chief events by which it was signalized, and the consequences which followed in its train.

Artaxerxes Mnemon, brother of the younger Cyrus, after a long, and not unprosperous reign of forty-five years, was, as we have stated, succeeded by his son Ochus B.C. 359, whose reign extended to twenty-one years. His successor, Arses, reigned two years, and on his death, B.C. 336, Darius Codomanus, the last of the monarchs of ancient Persia, mounted the throne. This monarch was speedily involved in a war with Alexander, who had succeeded his father Philip, not long after the accession of Darius to the throne of Persia. Macedon had by this time gained the supremacy over all Greece. Philip by his bold attacks on weaker states, and profuse bribery in others, had obtained the formal place of general to the Amphictyonic Council of Greece, and under this appointment had been allowed to introduce his armies into Bœotia. After finishing the sacred war against Phocis, he defeated the Athenians and Thebans in a decisive battle at Chæronea. From this time he had no rival; all Greece was at his disposal; and the first grand project, to which he determined to make his command of all the Greek states available, was an expedition against Persia. He perished soon after, while making his preparations against Persia, by the hand of one of his officers, and left his throne, and his meditated project, to his son Alexander, now

only twenty years of age. The youth even surpassed the father in vastness of aspiration, blended with enthusiasm, decision, daring, and a piercing intelligence. At the head of 30,000 Greeks collected from all the states of Greek race, he proceeded across the Hellespont to Asia, B.C. 334; and in three battles, that of the Granicus in Mysia, that of Issus on the limit of Syria, and finally that of Arbela beyond the Tigris, he gained the complete possession of the Persian empire. Soon after the last of these battles, B.C. 331, Darius was slain, while in his flight, by one of his officers.

This was the end of the last successor and descendant of Cyrus; and this the end of the vast empire which he had founded. That empire had lasted for a period of two centuries only, and its duration was brief compared with that of the preceding empire of Assyria. But its era was far more brilliant, and its whole character far more civilizing and beneficent. It was not a mere embodiment of force, like the tyranny of Nineveh or Babylon, but an advanced form of dominion as to its intelligence and liberality, and such as carried forward the amelioration of the east by an important step. Notwithstanding the violent spirit, and precipitate ambition of some of Cyrus' successors on the Persian throne, the whole character of Persian rule and policy, and even of the Persian people, inherited the more generous and benign spirit of its founder, and bore to the last the impress of his first directing impulse.

We may remark further, that on the condition of eastern populations generally, the dominion inaugurated by Cyrus introduced on the whole a beneficent change. Its force was less absolute and oppressive; it had more of the mitigating intermixture of law, and aimed more sincerely, though still in a very inadequate degree, at the happiness of the nations comprehended under it. Moreover, the religion of the Persians was not that base, brutish idolatry, which had been rife at Babylon, Nineveh, and Egypt; but seems to have retained, and that in popular tradition and intelligence, some just notions of the Deity. Too little is known of it, to entitle us to speak with confidence regarding its character and influence. Its juster conceptions of one Supreme Deity were held probably in a faint manner, and were certainly associated with the adoration of the sun, and of the sacred fire, as emblems of the Divinity. Zoroaster, the

celebrated reformer of their religion, inculcated belief in the unity of the First Cause, existing from eternity; and added the notion of two ruling principles in the universe; one, named Hormuzd, the source of all good; the other, Ahriman, the source of all evil. Zoroaster is supposed to have flourished in the times of Cyrus, and to have had intercourse with the illustrious Jewish prophets, who were held in such esteem at the court of the great king at Susa; with Daniel, Ezekiel, and Ezra. From them, or their brethren, he is judged, if not to have borrowed the primary notions, at least to have obtained loftier conceptions of the Deity, as the infinite and everlasting Intelligence, filling the universe with his presence and power. How far this may have been the case, cannot be with certainty determined; but at least the whole view of the Persian system of religion from his time, whether as a partial result of Jewish association, or independent of it, entitles the Persians to rank much higher in religious thought among ancient nations, than any other people anterior to the spread of the full light of Christianity. They held, though perhaps obscurely, these higher truths regarding the Deity, in the national faith and worship; whereas these remains of ancient revelation, in Assyria and Babylon, would seem to have been overborne and lost in idolatry, in the worship of heroes, and of the separate objects of the heavenly constellations; and in Egypt, they were wholly withdrawn from ordinary knowledge, and confined to the initiated of the priesthood; while the common people were abandoned to every degrading conception and practice in idol worship, that their grovelling imagination could suggest. In Greece, again, although gradually some nobler conceptions of the Supreme Deity were attained by its more eminent philosophers, and perhaps unfolded in the Eleusinian mysteries, the system prevalent in popular belief, was a mythology compounded of the fables of gods and heroes, which had, it is true, more elevation than that of Egypt, and was set forth in a manner more adapted to attract an imaginative interest and admiration; yet was it not simply false and abhorrent as idolatry, but it was incomparably mean and frivolous, as compared with the general conceptions prevalent amongst the Persian race.

Hence we may deem the spread of Persian conquests, and the influence of the Persian monarchy, for two centuries, over the east, to have been, on the whole, adverse to the baser systems of



idolatry, and, so far as that influence operated, to have gradually spread some rays of purer truth amongst the nations, and thus prepared the human mind, in some slight degree at least, for the illuminations of revealed truth. The Persian monarchy was thus an advance upon the Assyrian, both in its more humane and enlightened character, and in its nobler elements of religious thought, either retained and cherished from ancient tradition, or kindled by the solemn teachings of the prophets of the captivity. If it were independent of this last source, then we must regard the religion of the Persians as the inheritance of their race, derived, though in dwindled amount, from their great ancestor Elam, the son of Shem. Such do we deem to be no fanciful or exaggerated view to take of, at least, the possible influence of the second monarchy of the world, upon the character of religious thought in the east, not, however, before, but after the times of the Jewish captivity. This is by no means saying, that any religious truth regarding the Deity was made prevalent in proportion to the extent of Persian conquests; that where such truth prevailed, it was free from accompanying falsehood and error; much less that it could avail to regenerate the fallen nature of man. But considering the condition of the ancient world intellectually and morally, in a comprehensive view as a whole, it seems right to admit, that the Persian belief was a mighty advance on Assyrian, Egyptian, and Grecian idolatry; and that its diffusion, more by publicity and the spread of Persian power, is to be considered as a step onward, in the history of humanity, in the way of a moral preparation for the full effulgence of revealed truth. We are afraid of pushing this representation too far; but we think some such inference should be drawn from the contemplation, in this general view of its results, of the brilliant and rapidly successful monarchy reared, under the express destination of Providence, by Cyrus, the avenger of nations on Babylon, and the restorer of God's chosen people.

We will add, before closing our references to the Persian monarchy, that its effect, politically, on the condition of the nations of the east, was one of decided progress in their civilization, and of marked and evident preparation for the next great world's empire which followed. When we speak of civilization, we speak of course comparatively, and with reference to the cir-

cumstances and possibilities of any given age; and thus understood, it cannot be doubted, that the effect of Persian rule, on the whole, was a great improvement on the preceding condition of the many nations embraced in its wide compass. If it bore down all resistance of separate nations by its force, it, by the same power, gave them rest and security in respect of one another; and though often engaged in wars on its limit, whether towards Europe, or east of the Caspian, Persia gave peace and rest to the central nations of her empire, and gradually inured these to the habits of industrious life, and to an intermixture by peaceful intercourse, eminently favourable to a wider unity of nations than had before existed. None would say, that comparing the period of the Persian monarchy with the preceding centuries of the rule of Nineveh and Babylon, the spectacle of humanity does not exhibit something more of repose, of social progress, and, altogether, more of what is hopeful and cheering, in the Persian, than in the Assyrian period; and that not merely, we think, as a fact of some general and necessary progress in human condition, but as a change specially due to the character and influence of the Persian rule and power. Its power became greater, more formidable and absolute, than even that of Assyria; it was more widely felt and yielded to; and it was less contested, in its more distant provinces, with the exception of Asia Minor. It hence enforced its mandates with less disturbance; and such compressive force was needed, in that crisis, for the nations of Central Asia, with a view to their peaceful progress in social combination. And such progress, through a space of two centuries, the monarchy of Cyrus on the whole ensured.

But his monarchy also was eminently preparative, in its effect in Asia, for the succession of the third empire. It amalgamated the nations into one, habituated them to a single allegiance and to a common direction, gradually reduced and extinguished all independent influence in any single nation, which had been centered in ancient ruling families or classes, and accustomed all ranks to look for favour or help to a single monarch. Persian officers were made governors and satraps in the provinces, and the chiefs of the ancient families either sank into the ranks of the people, or held appointments in other provinces than their own. Moreover, the empire of Persia was much more firmly consolidated into one mass, than that which preceded it; and it was

of greatly wider extent. The addition of Asia Minor, consequent on the defeat of Croesus, was of itself an immense accession of territory, of wealth, of great cities, and of command of the sea; and though this accession became the field of its future struggles, yet it was grasped to the very last; while at one period, and for several years, the Persian empire extended over Thrace, to Macedon and Thessaly. On the eastern side of the empire, its limit lay beyond the Indus, and a tribute of gold dust was collected with annual regularity from India.

Thus, if we consider the extent of the empire, and its unity, together with the absence of separate native authorities in its many nations, it will be perceived, that it had so levelled, or beaten down the nations into one mass, subject to one allegiance, and having no separate defences, except in the armies of the central power, that it became capable of submissive transfer, as a whole, to the sceptre of whoever should overthrow those armies, and so set aside the Persian dynasty. This condition alone rendered possible the succession of a third still mightier empire, and so, the fulfilment of prophecy, and the preparations for the fourth empire of the world. In three battles, as we have said, Alexander won the Persian empire; and though resistance was offered to him at Tyre, and in Egypt, such resistance was soon vanquished; while the mass of the empire, from the Ægean to the Indus, yielded itself, without a contest, to an European master. Evidently, therefore, one empire became a platform for a succeeding empire; the Assyrian for the Persian, the Persian for the Greek, and the Greek for the Roman. The independence of separate nations was, in these greater political combinations, extinguished; and a despotism, mitigated more or less by law and reason in the progress of empires, was established, so as to amalgamate populations into one. Nor are we to deem such despotism, in the rude, unsettled, conflicting state of earlier populations, altogether a calamity. On the contrary, it would seem to have been a necessary step in human progress; and while its injustice can be no way vindicated, as to its first aggressions or motives, its necessity is yet evident, as a prevention of still greater injustice and misery, and a deliverance, to the nations, from internecine war.

Until nations had attained the habits of peace, and became inured to law among themselves, the restraint of some paramount

rule was needed; and what the civil ruler of a town is to the maintenance of quiet and order among its inhabitants, a powerful monarchy was, in ancient times, to the ensuring peace and the opportunities for industry and progress among lawless nations. Such would at least seem to have been the results, in ancient times, of the earlier monarchies of the world. Amid much evil, oppression, and wrong, they were a preparation and discipline to humanity for a higher and more lenient polity; and each greater monarchy extended, more and more widely, the unity, the intercourse, and the harmony of nations. Thus the Persian monarchy left the once divided and lawless nations of Asia, in a different condition from that wherein it found them; for though a great proportion had been united under the Babylonian sceptre, no such unity, for its adhesion, compactness, and extent, had been realized as that exhibited at the close of the Persian kingdom, when the mere defeat of the great king placed the whole of Asia, west of the Indus and south of the Caspian, at the feet of a Macedonian warrior, who had not yet reached his twenty-third year.

Such, then, was the preparation effected by the monarchy of which Cyrus was the founder, in the condition of the nations of western Asia, for the succeeding empire of Macedon; and such also the advance generally in civilization promoted by the more generous and enlightened character of its policy and rule, as compared with the gloomy, ruthless despotism of Assyria and Babylon. If, in concluding our review of the Persian monarchy, we revert once more to its place in history, and in the dispensations of Providence, it is impossible not to be struck with the evidence of its having been predestined to fulfil a distinct service, in the general history of humanity, and in particular to the church of the living God. The over-ruling Providential control which determined its direction as far as it tended to human welfare at large, or elicited good out of its many evils, implies no approval of those evils, or of the particular acts of aggression or misrule connected with its history, much less of the character and motives of its successive kings. It is only on a view of its general influence as a whole, and in reference to the alternative of perpetual struggles which its ascendancy prevented, together with its generally more humane character, that we can affirm the Persian period to have been a more beneficent era to the world, and in this sense, and so

far, the Persian monarchy to have been pre-ordained, as an instrument to advance the progress of the world, unto the times of a better dispensation.

But besides this, as the instrumentality destined by Providence for the restoration of Israel, its place is most peculiar. That restoration, as we have formerly remarked, is nearly a unique circumstance in history, and was utterly improbable to the calculations of ordinary policy. And it included not the mere freedom to return to Judea, but the succeeding centuries of sheltered seclusion, ensured by the Persian monarchy, through its whole duration, to the re-established tribes in Palestine; in virtue of which, the grand purpose of their restoration was perfectly realized in their growth and prosperity as a nation. Hence they attained such vigour, and their numbers so multiplied, that they were fitted to survive as a people, through the struggles which awaited them, in the centuries yet remaining after the fall of Persia, till the Christian era. They re-occupied their former position, and set up anew the appointed rites of Divine worship. Of this great result Persia, or Cyrus as its chief, was the immediate instrument. Hence in a very remote anterior age, he had been named in prophecy for this service; and the era of Persian triumph over Babylon had been anticipated by almost the earliest of the inspired writers, after the disunion of the tribes. Its anticipated coming, though distant, was a solace to Israel, as to succeeding prophets and saints, amidst forebodings of the calamities which should previously befall their country and race. Those calamities arrived. The ruthless ambition of Babylon triumphed. But the appointed avenger of Israel appeared also, in due time. Babylon was captured and resigned to perpetual desolations; and the captives made free and replaced as a nation to fulfil service to Jehovah, in the land of their ancient inheritance, for many centuries more of their history. They survived the fall of the great empire which had been their protector. The Macedonian conqueror of Persia found the Jewish nation a powerful and united people, and he was moved to receive with deep reverence the high priest and his companions, who came out to meet him on his approach to Jerusalem. The descendants of the captivity, restored and sheltered by Persia, presented to Alexander the spectacle of a flourishing and cultivated nation, whose calm and devout bearing, as the worshippers of the unknown God, attracted his thoughtful regard,

and obtained, as it merited, his favour and protection. But in these observations, we anticipate in our narrative, and must now turn to contemplate the rise of that European monarchy of the world, which is the third in the order of its history, and which the Macedonian conqueror established on the ruins of the Persian throne.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## GREECE.

## THE MACEDONIAN EMPIRE.

Necessity for reviewing the rise of the Greek states, as they formed the strength of Macedonian power—Late period of civilization in Europe—This fact consonant with the narrative of Scripture—Chief elements of civilization—The first small states of Greece—Effect of Hellenic unity and emulation—Sparta, legislation of Lycurgus—Contests with Athens and Thebes—Athens, rule of her kings and archons—Constitution of Solon—Rule of Pisistratus—Retreat of Hippias to Persia—Expeditions of Darius and Xerxes—Subsequent rise of Athenian power—Era of Athenian genius—Administration of Pericles—Peloponnesian war—Defeat of Athens—Continued intellectual progress—Momentous value of such progress—Recovery of Athenian power—Rise of the Macedonian kingdom—Aggressions of Philip—Policy of Demosthenes—Victory of Philip at Chæronæa, and subjugation of all Greece—Philip meditates an expedition against Persia—His death—Alexander—Apparent dependence of all the great changes which followed on the character of this single mind—Yet all human agencies under the control of a higher rule—Decisive measures of Alexander in quelling movements in Greece—Preparations against Persia resumed—Departure of Alexander with his army—Victories of the Granicus and Issus—Capture of Tyre, and peaceful submission of Jerusalem—Conquest of Egypt—Alexandria founded—Alexander's final victory at Arbela—Death of Darius—Alexander master of all the east—His expedition across the Indus—Return, and death at Babylon—Spread of Greek civilization throughout the east—Permanence of the Greek conquest—The four succeeding monarchies; Macedon, Pergamus, Syria, and Egypt—Greek kingdom of the Ptolemies in Egypt—Spread of the Greek language, and civilization in Egypt—Palestine under the rule of the Ptolemies—Jewish colony at Alexandria—Greek version of their Scriptures—Fuller account of its results—Its general use among Jews in foreign cities—Its influence on the idiom of the New Testament—Remarks on the amount of this peculiarity—Results of the Macedonian conquest, as preparatory to the times of Christianity—The diffusion of Greek literature—The preservation of the Jewish state, and the wider publicity of the Jewish Scriptures—Importance and permanent influence of the Greek intellectual development, chiefly at Athens—Advanced state of human intelligence in the east effected by the diffusion of Greek literature—Character of the Christian dispensation as appealing to such intelligence in its evidence and doctrines.

FROM the long and varied review of Asiatic races and kingdoms, in which we have been occupied in previous chapters, we turn

with a new, and greatly more exciting and grateful interest, to the contemplation of European civilization, and of European enterprise and conquest. We have had necessarily to advert to these incidentally, in describing the collisions of the last great eastern monarchy with the rising states of Greece, and in setting forth the results produced on the development and character of these states, particularly that of the Athenians, by the victories, of imperishable fame and lustre, won against the armaments of Persia, on land, and on the water. We have attempted to trace the continued decline of the intrinsic power of Persia, though still maintaining her dominion over Asiatic Greek states, from the expedition of Xerxes, through the ensuing 150 years, down to the last of his successors; and the augmenting power of the Greek polities of Europe during the same period; though this power was shifted, as to its main centre, from state to state, from Athens to Sparta, from Sparta to Thebes, and again restored in great degree to Athens. We have remarked, how the confidence, and aspiring purpose, of the Greek people, considered as a whole, rose higher in the ever-renewed, though oft-times intermitted collision with the great monarchy which once they so much dreaded; and how the expedition of the Greeks under the younger Cyrus, and their bold and safe retreat after having penetrated to the centre of the empire and discovered its inherent weakness, had raised thoughts of fatal omen to Persia, in the breasts of Greek warriors; insomuch that the notion of attacking the empire at its seat of power beyond the Tigris, became familiar to the musings of Greek generals, and was, at one moment, on the point of being put to the experiment, by the Spartan king and hero Agesilaus. This was in B.C. 394, or some sixty years before the expedition of Alexander; his purpose being set aside only by the imminent peril of his country in her contest with Thebes, which compelled his hasty march with all his forces from Asia Minor back to Greece. But for this interruption, occasioned by a war secretly fomented against Lacedæmon by Persia, and aided by Persian gold, the fall of the great empire had in all probability happened long before the rise of the great northern state of Macedon; but it would have happened under far other conditions, and with other results, than those which attended the expedition of Alexander



of Macedon. Had even the Spartan general been successful in defeating the armies of Artaxerxes Mnemon, and so had avenged the former desolation of Greece by the Persian armies, in the capture of Susa, or Babylon, and the wide devastation of the country, it is not probable, that, with only the forces of Sparta, he could have permanently held his conquests, except perhaps the nearer states of Asia Minor. Enriched by the acquisition of these, Sparta would have gained a still higher temporary ascendancy; and her power would have been so far augmented, with or without the participation of Athens, as to provide in a later age an effectual counterbalance and check to the arms and ambition of Philip of Macedonia. There would, on the probable suppositions we have made, have been no complete and permanent subjugation of Asia to Europe, and no dominance gained by the kingdom gradually rising on the north of Greece, over the elder and more civilized southern states, so as to compel the union of all Greece against Persia.

We know what course events actually took; that in Macedonia the germ was developing of a new and fearful power, destined first to humble all Greece and Thrace to its sway, and next to launch the combined forces of Greece on Persia, and after the overthrow of that monarchy, to become itself the third vast empire of the world. We have for a moment indulged in the speculations, dependent on a different and earlier project, as entertained by the Spartan king, and one which seemed, from his high character and uniform success as a general, quite feasible to his arms. There is no impropriety in such conjectures. It is often highly instructive to pause at the critical positions, so to speak, of human affairs, when opposite possibilities seem nicely balanced, and each to human sagacity equally probable. It is instructive to pause at these, and cast conjecture as to the alternatives of the consequences which really ensued; because, at *these* points, we mark the secret determinations of a higher wisdom, directing the current of events into that channel, which should realize its own comprehensive purpose. Not that we need imagine any direct Divine interference in such instances. The whole decision of events may have been the result of human motives and human passions. But at least, where the issue at any crisis is inde-

terminable by man's judgment; where either of two, or more possible lines of consequences seems equally probable, we are constrained to admire that wisdom which foresaw each reality, ages before its date, and which sometimes, as in the case of the third empire of the world, predicted its fulfilment. Not Sparta, but Macedon, was to vanquish Persia; not a momentary defeat, but an utter overthrow was to be inflicted on the great monarchy, by the entire force of Greece; and a new empire, essentially Greek, was to spread beyond the Indus, and the language and literature of Greece, with all their consequent influence, were to spread over Asia Minor, and Syria, and Egypt.

In the chapters we have devoted to preceding empires, it has been our aim to exhibit such an outline of the origin, advance, and decline of each, as, without being strictly historical detail, or even a summary of chief events, might yet give a distinct and faithful representation of such empire in its character, grandeur, and influence, as an entire whole; an historical picture, impressive, as far as we could render it, and complete in itself. Such historical review of any given empire necessarily becomes intermingled in its relations to other empires, especially at the fall of an empire, when it merges into the one succeeding. Yet, while making our account of each continuous, chronologically, from one into the other, we have preferred, at the risk of some repetition, to recite the story of each from its own commencement, and so to give to our imperfect sketches the effect of definite, independent, and complete outline. This method alone fulfils the aim of this work, which is not a continuous history of the ancient world, but a review of ancient empires; and though the affairs of these become intertwined, the aim has been to treat of each as a principal and entire theme on its own ground. In this manner of treatment, the image of the grandeur and force of each great empire attains consistency and vividness; the elements which enter into its character and policy can be more distinctly elicited, and the whole impression of its influence and effect on contemporary events, or on succeeding times, can be more determinately given.

We have thus attempted, accordingly, a full account of the kingdom of Egypt in its greatness and decline; though the picture of its decline necessarily involved much allusion to the conquests of Babylon, of Persia, and lastly even of Greece.

The review of Assyria, in like manner, terminated in allusions to the rising monarchy of Persia; and the fall of this last monarchy could not but include some allusion to the Macedonian power and conquests. For the same reason, instead of resuming the conquests of Alexander at the point where our account of the Persian monarchy terminates, we think it best, in accordance with the plan of preceding chapters, to retrace the story of Greece from a far earlier date, and to show its advance in civilization, in arts, in arms, till the predominance of Macedon gained command of its combined force, and became thus able to cope with Asia, and to rear a third greater empire, stretching from the Adriatic to the Hydaspes. Greece demands this fulness and entireness of review; for the basis of the Macedonian conquests was Greece rather than Macedon, and the picture of its wonderful development of genius and enterprise will repay our most intense contemplation. Its history exhibits the first outburst and morning of European intelligence and energy; an era, though marred by much evil, destined in the purposes of Providence to exert a perpetual influence on the subsequent history of Europe and of the world.

Let not our readers infer, from these allusions, that we are about to write of Greece in a spirit of indiscriminate eulogy, such as would imply oblivion of the infinitely surpassing glory of the Christian era. In such allusions as we may make to its more flourishing period, our references are always to be understood with the deductions attaching to the best state of fallen humanity on moral grounds, and with admission of the appalling evils actually manifest in Greek history, both in its infatuated idolatry, and in the sensuality which pervaded all ranks, even amid the radiance of its literature and arts. With the influence of Christianity on the heart, and even on the intellect of man, no other moral force may compare. Its power is unique, as its origin is Divine; and it will be our hope to show, after the whole grandeur of the earth's mighty empires has passed in review before us, and after a contemplation of the best and the highest results, which the intellect and genius of humanity, anterior to revelation, could attain in its brightest era in Greek history, that Christianity was the one light which the unsettled footing and conflict of the best speculations showed the need of, and the one solace which the agonies of humanity through ages of infatuation and despair secretly panted

after. Our review of the world's passing empires, and noblest efforts of intelligence, will conduct to the revelations of Christianity, not only chronologically, but morally and argumentatively, as previous illustrations of the need of a Divine revelation of truth, wisdom, and mercy, and of the preparations for its time of promulgation in the political levelling and unity of nations, and in the means thus provided for the publicity and spread of Christian truth. These statements will sufficiently apprise the reader of the qualifications, under which we may happen to offer any expression of interest or admiration, in our allusions to the brighter period and phase of Greek story. To such review we now proceed; commencing our references with the earliest dawn of Greek, that is, of European civilization.

The first fact which meets the student of history, in tracing the origin of nations, and their growth into civilized polities, is the late period of the dawn of European civilization, as compared with the history of Asiatic nations and empires, and especially as compared with the remote antiquity of the kingdom of the Nile. When the course of these had run to their period, through some fifteen or twenty centuries, the story of Europe was at its beginning. If we even give our faith to the poems of Homer as based on actual events, such events, in the Trojan war, can be placed at no earlier date than about 1,000 years before Christ. But at that time Nineveh was in its grandeur, the cities and pyramids of the Nile were the monuments of a remote age, and Jerusalem was the capital of a kingdom which, under the sceptre of David or Solomon, reached from the Great Sea to the Euphrates. But leaving Homeric traditions to their precarious pretensions, it is certain that the most ancient limit which history can rely on, in the antiquity of Greek kingdoms, ascends no higher than about 800 B.C., or the year in sacred history when Jonah forewarned Nineveh of its doom. This would be the date assigned to the legislation of Lycurgus at Sparta; while the political settlement of the tribes of Attica, under Solon's constitution, dates some 200 years later. Moreover, it is necessary to remark, that the civilization of these earliest states of Europe, of any name, was borrowed from the Asiatic side of the Ægean, or from Egypt. Cecrops, an Egyptian, taught the dispersed families around the Cephissus, in the Attic plain, the advantage of political unity, and of a fortress as its centre; the colony brought by

Danaus, another Egyptian, aided the first kingdom formed in the Peloponnesus, that of Argos, and Cadmus, a Phœnician from Tyre or Sidon, imported to Thebes the letters of the alphabet, which taught Greece to depict her first thoughts in writing. Such are the traditions of Greek beginnings, maintained among the Greeks themselves.

We have said nothing of the western states of Europe, those formed at the foot of Italy, those of Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily, or Etruria north of the Tiber, or Massilia, near the mouth of the Rhone. These, however, have no higher antiquity, to be relied on, than that of Argos or Thebes; and they are all either colonies from the Greek towns of Asia Minor, or from the coast of Phœnicia. The states of Græcia Magna on the Tarentine Gulf, or Syracuse, or Etruria, thus were modern states, like those of Greece proper, in the very antiquity of Egypt and Judea; and all had derived their origin and arts from eastern colonization.

Our reason for remarking on this fact in European civilization, as exhibited in the independent traditions or records of profane history, is, to show how perfectly it is in consistency with sacred history, as representing the centre of nations to be in Asia, and the high antiquity of its cities, and its kingdoms. The race of Japheth, dispersed westward, and scattered in small bands, as they selected positions on the stream, or near the forest, where was no town, or hamlet, or cultivated field, and where no human footstep had preceded their own, were committed to a long struggle with the difficulties of their lot, and subsisted for generations in a loose and scattered condition, exposed to mutual predatory incursions, before their numbers had multiplied so as to make them capable locally, or by concert and intercourse, of becoming organized as political states. Pretty much of this character, is the picture given by Thucydides, of the early populations of that Greece, in the brilliant zenith of whose glory and greatness that weightiest of historical annalists wrote. Gradually families multiplied into clans, and clans enlarged into tribes, and tribes into nations, in the various settlements formed in Europe; first, on points along the indented coast-line of Thrace and Greece, and the adjacent islands, and then further west, in Sicily and Italy, and finally, in gradual advance across the interior of Europe, in Macedonia, Epirus, Illyricum, along the Noric and Rætian Alps, in Gaul, Germany, Scandinavia, and last in

the British isles, the furthest position westward, of the Japhethite race. In the more remote settlements of northern Europe, and everywhere from the Alps northward, human tribes led a fierce barbaric life; but southward, from the mouth of the Rhone, small states began to flourish, the chief and earliest of which we have already named; Etruria, the states of Magna Græcia, and of Sicily; and last of all, though by some centuries later, that small polity, with its single mud-walled village on the Tiber, which after a precarious existence, through the struggles of many centuries, first with neighbouring towns, and then with neighbouring states and peoples, was destined to give law to the world.

But the rise of Rome into power, even in Italy, was not yet. The foundations of the city, from which its empire is dated, were not laid, when Lycurgus is reputed to have framed the constitution of Sparta; and the whole period of Grecian development, of Grecian power, conquest, and art, was to precede the ascendancy of the last great empire of the world, founded on the shores of the Tiber. The chief grand era of Greek history, in the rise and power of the many Greek states, and in their amalgamation under Philip and Alexander, had been completed, before Rome had spread her conquests even as far as Naples. In 331 B.C. the Greeks under Alexander had become masters of the east; but it was years after this date that the limit of Roman conquest had been pushed as far as the Gulf of Tarentum. In 266 B.C. the subjugation of Italy only, had been accomplished; and the struggles of another century were needed for the full development of Roman power and dominion.

We have remarked on the comparatively late commencement of civilization in Europe, and on its derived origin from the accession of colonists from Phœnicæ and Egypt, as well as from intercourse in a later period with the Greek settlements of Asia Minor, themselves rapidly advanced by their vicinity to the ancient civilization of the east. We have now to add, that Greek civilization, while thus aided and stimulated at its origin by intercourse with Asia, assumed speedily a perfectly distinct and independent character; and, though a later birth of time, gave example of a vast superiority in its whole development over that of Asia and Egypt. When we speak of civilization, we mean to denote that state of society which is comprehended in the union of many elements, that serve to constitute its political, moral, and intellectual

improvement, and the degree of which marks its difference and distance from the primitive barbarism and dispersion of its original condition. The chief of these elements are, political union combined with freedom, the security of laws, the increase of material resources, the increase and spread of knowledge, the improvement of general intelligence, the refinement and reserve of manners as opposed to rude self-assertion and strife, and amenableness to the right moral judgment of society, in its individual members; to which we may add, the acquisitions of science and of art. Without affecting any nice precision, in analysing the very complex notion designed by the term civilization, or to exhaust its import by enumerating every element, it may be confidently said, that a state of society, in which political organization, laws, security, milder manners, intelligence, science, and arts prevail, combines in a high degree the character of civilized, and is removed by an incalculable difference and interval, from the disorganized and predatory life of a horde of barbarians. A higher civilization can of course be conceived, in respect of its moral complexion, which is that bestowed by Christianity alone, in the pervading influence of genuine rectitude of motive, purity of heart, and unfeigned charity and benignity of spirit towards all. But in our present review, we have not reached the age when this divine phase of social life and character came to be spread over Greece and all Europe, as well as over great part of Asia and Africa. This efflorescence of a more beautiful human life was to come, when its Divine Herald, its example, its bestower, should arrive in our lower world, to give peace to its guilt and strife and sorrows. But we have here to speak of the comparative degree of general civilization, as manifested among nations anterior to the spread of Christianity, and in respect of those elements alone which human arrangements may avail to realize.

Adverting then to the rise and character of European civilization, which was to be developed in Greece in the period from 600 to 300 B.C., and adverting to it, at this point, prospectively, what a wonderfully higher order of society as to intelligence, freedom, enterprise, and art, opens upon our view in the history of the Greek states! What a contrast is seen in the state of Athens under Pericles, to that of Memphis, or of Babylon, or Persepolis! What a freer life of the individual mind and of the mass, in the one; what debasement and brutish ignorance of the many, in the other! How different

the assemblages of the Areopagus, or the Prytaneum, or the Agora, or the Lyceum, at Athens; and the sottish, dreamy existence of populations in Asiatic cities, without freedom, without objects on which to exert a free judgment, or feel a mental interest, without speculation except in the reveries of a few, without a free and clear horizon of thought even on matters of secular science and inquiry! But we are anticipating. Our wish was to suggest a general conception beforehand of that intellectual and political development, exhibited in the newly-risen states of Europe, to the history of which we now turn our attention. In our review, we shall shun all detail of events, and shall simply cast a glance on the chief states of Greece in the circumstances of their origin, and mark their characteristic tendencies, and the periods of the ascendancy and power of each, till the age of Philip of Macedon.

We shall, of course, refrain from discussing the authenticity of Greek traditional history, anterior to the age of Lycurgus, the legislator of Sparta, on the limit of about 800 years before Christ. The Pelasgian era, which embraces the earlier gradual spread of the first migrations of Japheth's race from Asia, and the first ages of the accession of colonists and leaders from Phœnicia and Egypt, the age of Cecrops, Danaus, Cadmus and Pelops,—all that period of Hellenic progress from its origin, is covered with impenetrable obscurity. Of late, it has been the prevailing disposition of historians, to call in question the fact of such foreign accessions of colonists, under the leaders just named. But tradition, joined to the independent probability of settlements from the older and more civilized kingdoms of Asia and Egypt, would seem to cast the balance in favour of the representations more commonly given; to the effect, that the dispersed and barbarous tribes of the Pelasgi were indebted to foreign leaders for their first political organizations, and for the first elements and usages of civilization. This earliest period of traditional Greek history terminates conjecturally at 1400 B. C. Then comes the heroic age of Greece, also, of course, one of traditions; the age of the enterprise and daring achievements of single heroes, Hercules of Thebes, Theseus of Athens, Minos of Crete, and Jason of Iolcus in Thessaly, with his comrades of the Argonautic expedition. This age is represented as extending from B. C. 1400, to B. C. 1200. Then, in the next century, comes the epoch of the Trojan war,



commencing in 1194 B.C., and terminating by the capture of Troy, in 1184 B.C. The age of Homer and Hesiod is given at from 900 to 800 B.C. Then after this last limit, 800 B.C., commences what is deemed the fully authentic period of Greek history, in the era of the legislation of Lycurgus; which however is placed by some authors much earlier. Admitting the proximate accuracy of this date, it will be found to harmonize nearly with the age of Pul, or Belus II. in Assyrian history, when Nineveh was in its pride and glory; and is about half a century anterior to the founding of Rome, which took place B.C. 753. Thus the commencement of political organization in Greece is coincident with the zenith of Assyrian splendour and power, and with the first small aggregation of that people on the Tiber who were afterwards to become masters of the world. In sacred history, the legislation of Lycurgus at Sparta is nearly coincident with the times of the prophets Jonah, Amos, and Isaiah, and of Uzziah king of Judah.

If, taking our stand on this limit, we cast our view to the condition of Greece itself, in its various divisions, we find that very many small states at this time existed, and had attained to some degree of power and consolidation, particularly in the Peloponnesus. Thus Argos, and Troezen, in the Argolic peninsula, seem to have preceded Sparta. But these small towns or states, together with that of Messene, a more formidable early rival of Sparta on its western border, were speedily reduced to subjection under Lacedæmon, and the population, particularly the Messenian, reduced to a servile condition. On the north of the Peloponnesus had flourished, also anterior to Sparta, the ancient city of Sicyon, the capital of Achæa, and Corinth, situated on the isthmus. The former of these gradually declined; but Corinth, in consequence of its maritime position, and commerce, flourished to the latest times of Greek independence. Beyond the isthmus, the small state of Megara was gradually forming; and further east, the families dispersed in Attica were being organized into political unity under the descendants of Codrus, and their small capital of Athens was gradually extending. On the north of Attica, the city and state of Thebes had been founded, which gradually became the capital of Bœotia. To the north of Mount Ceta, in Thessaly, in the rich plain watered by the Peneus and its tributaries, various cities had been reared, each with the command of some territory; but none of them, with the exception of

Phæræ in the last years of Greek independence, rose to any extensive command. On the south of Mount Cæta rose the more powerful states of ancient Greece, and the chief of these were Sparta, Athens, Corinth, and Thebes. Yet did the minor states, intermixed with these, and united in alliance to each in turn, or sometimes subject to them, maintain much independence for a long period, and play a conspicuous part in the critical conjunctures of Greek history, both in the first great perils of the Persian invasions, and in the contests of after times, among the principal Greek states. Thus the whole of Greece proper presented an assemblage of many independent states, consisting of the same people of the Hellenes, speaking the same language, united by the bonds of the same religious associations and usages, and meeting at the great national festivals of Elus, of Delphi, of Corinth, of Nemea, in successive years, to celebrate the unity of their common origin and interests, and to mingle in contests of skill and strength for prizes in the chariot-race and other games.

Never has there been exemplified such a combination of distinct states, held together by so many ties of national enthusiasm, and yet maintaining their distinct position and politics. What chiefly contributed to their separate form and independence, in that early period of society, was the physical character of their country, south of Parnassus and Mount Cæta, which is that of a territory intersected in all directions by mountain ranges, and its coast indented with deep gulfs and bays. Mountain ridges, and narrow rocky passes, defended each small state, in great degree, from its neighbour. Hence, in the early periods of their history, no single state attained to such greatness as, for any long period, to overpower the rest; and not till after the growth and aggressions of a kingdom north of Thessaly, which had made easy conquest of its plains, and at last won, through intrigue, the command of its southern pass at Thermopylæ, was the independence of Attica, Corinth, and Sparta brought into peril, and finally overwhelmed.

It is easy to conceive, how a position so unexampled in its many advantages and incentives acted upon the character of the Hellenic tribes, both in their separate unities, and in their common emulation and enthusiasm as a Greek race, in calling forth the energy of their intellect and genius to its highest possible stretch, in political sagacity, in military and naval enterprise, and

in the rivalry of arts and literature. This rivalry was kindled by the separate form and interest of states in such close neighbourhood, united by constant intercourse, and speaking the same language. Its effect became conspicuous pre-eminently in the character of the Athenian people; but all the other states of Greece shared in the same rapid advance of intelligence and general civilization. Such endurance in separate politics, combined with such intercommunity of speech, of national interests, of intercourse, of public discussions, and religious festivities, cannot be met with elsewhere in ancient history; and the only parallel to it, and that upon a larger scale, but with similar results, is the picture of Europe, in its division into many kingdoms, after the fall of the Roman empire, and the intercourse and competition maintained among them, in arts, inventions, and literature, as well as in arms. If these kingdoms have not the tie of a common language, yet they are united in the general bonds of the same Christian faith; and the constancy of intercourse, and the publicity of all affairs, give an effect and impulse to the European family of nations, similar to that which was exemplified in the emulation and national unity of the Greek states. These remarks will have sufficed to exhibit the primary combinations, and general character of Greek civilization. At the same time, there were other accidental circumstances in their early history, which favoured its development; and perhaps we ought to admit, that there was something peculiar in the type of Greek intellect; for it is not easy to believe that every people, placed exactly in the same position, with all its accidents, would have exhibited the same splendour of talent, or run the same memorable, however chequered, career.

We shall now give a brief outline of the story of Greece, in respect of the rise of its chief states, Sparta and Athens, and in the ascendant gained successively afterwards by the three states, of Athens, Sparta, and Thebes, anterior to the growth of the Macedonian power. This review of the history of Greece proper is quite necessary, as preliminary to the illustration of the successful enterprise of Alexander; for it was not the force of the single kingdom of Macedon, that ensured the success of his expedition against Persia, but the union and valour of all the Greek states; which, however impatient of Alexander's rule, were not reluctant to avenge their former injuries on Persia, or

to share in the wealth and power of Asiatic conquests. But for the preceding civilization, the riches, the arts, intelligence, and valour of southern Greece, Macedon would have directed her ambition in vain to conquests beyond the Hellespont. Athens and Sparta had already defeated and humbled Persia on the soil of Greece, and in the waters of the *Ægean*; and their forces were indispensable, together with the contingents from smaller states, for the consummation of Greek triumph, in the overthrow of Darius at Arbela.

The historic period of Sparta dates from the age and legislation of Lycurgus, which we have already mentioned as being with most probability referred to about 800 B.C. It may seem too strong an expression to designate an epoch, which can only be assigned conjecturally, as an historic one; but the reason for this is, that its grand event, the constitution given by Lycurgus to Sparta, is fully ascertained as a fact, and as being so early as near the commencement of the eighth century, although its precise date cannot be determined. Such a fact also in the history of Sparta, is of such wide bearing in its social state, and of such lasting consequence in its history, that though its chronology be vague, it presents to us the fullest reality as an effect, in the life and character of the Doric settlement in the Peloponnesus. Whether Lycurgus originated the constitution of the Spartan polity, or only reformed, consolidated, and ratified under irrevocable oaths, regulations of government previously existing; from his time, at least, it is certain, that the constitution of Sparta attained a fixed form, and that stern character of social and political discipline, which distinguished it from all other states. Its two hereditary kings, its five ephori with a veto on royal decrees, its small senate, its equal division of land among the Spartan families, its public education of Spartan youth for endurance and valour in warfare, the discouragement of all pursuits of industry, and the prohibition of gold and silver, the equality of all Spartans in social rank, and last, the adjunct of the enslaved population called *Helots*, descendants of earlier Pelasgic colonists, whose labour in the city and the field was the subsistence of the whole free state—these arrangements combined to form a stern, haughty people of warriors, whose whole life was concentrated on personal valour, blended with lofty self-devotion in the interest of their own nation, and an unrelenting severity towards the subject race which they had reduced

to servitude. These last, the Helots of Sparta, consisted of the original population, whom the Doric tribes had subjugated, when they settled in the Peloponnesus, and their numbers were afterwards much increased by the subjugation of the Messenians. Thus the character of the ruling race, the Spartans, was cast in the mould of almost one principle, that of devotion to the pursuits of war in defence of their country. Individual interests and pursuits were merged in public self-consecration, and that in the sole form of a military education and discipline. The interests of trade, commerce, or literature, had no place in the life of the Spartan. Even the enjoyments of domestic life were in great degree proscribed, or permitted under strict limitations.

Such was the cast of political character given by the rules of the constitution of Lycurgus to the Lacedæmonian people; and its success was conspicuous, and enduring. It produced a people of warriors, and patriots, unrivalled in hardy endurance and self-sacrifice. But this was its chief result. It gave no free play to individual action and enterprise, except in the narrow prescribed limits. It stifled much of social and domestic feeling and affection. It gave no impulse to genius, or intellectual culture; and while Sparta shared in a degree in the general intelligence diffused over Greece, she produced no orator, poet, historian, or philosopher. It may be hence imagined how narrow and confined was their intellectual life, as well as their social enjoyment, and at what a sacrifice of the free cultivation of the intellect and the affections, the Spartan was disciplined to serve his country. How great the contrast of individual life at Lacedæmon, and of the aggregate of its public characters, to the life of an Athenian, and the manifold pursuits of statesmanship, of commerce, of philosophy, of literature, and of oratory at Athens! Sparta had her men of grave thought, her sagacious statesmen, her generals, her warriors; every one of them a hero and a patriot, and all informed with the intelligence, and gifted with the keen perception, common to all Greeks; but speculation, genius, and free enterprise were undeveloped.

Such being the national character given by their early constitution to the Spartan people, their history will need in these pages but a brief glance. It was not one of unchecked daring and aggression, as their military discipline and habitual attitude for war might have seemed to foreshadow. They were not an army

of republicans The monarchy, the ephoralty, and the senate of Sparta, held all tendencies to rash effort in check; and the character of the Spartan was as much formed to reverence of his elders, and of the authorities of the state, as to intrepidity in warfare against the enemy. Hence the history of Sparta displayed caution, slowness, and wisdom, in deliberation, as much as it did promptitude and daring, when activity was required. The first conquests of Sparta were in the Peloponnesus, in reducing their early rivals the Messenians and others to subjection. It took a noble part, in later times, with the Athenians in resistance to the second expedition of Persia to Greece; but it bore no share in the earlier struggle, ten years before, at Marathon. Leonidas, one of their kings, and his 300 companions, defended the pass of Thermopylæ, and being at last overpowered, fell on the spot where they fought. Sparta marked with extreme jealousy and apprehension the growth and extension of the Athenian power, after the defeat of Xerxes; but as Athens had greater opportunities for establishing a maritime dominion in the Ægean, Sparta could not interfere for many years to check it. The opportunity for Sparta's enterprise against Athens, and for winning her own ascendant in Greece, at last arrived, at the time of the memorable Peloponnesian war, which lasted twenty-seven years, and ended in the capture of Athens by the Spartan admiral Lysander, B.C. 404.

The supremacy which Athens had held for the long period of seventy-three years, from 477 B.C., was by this event transferred to Sparta; which state became, for the next thirty years, the dominant power in Greece. Among the isles of the Ægean, and in some Greek cities of Asia Minor, as well as in Greece generally, the power of Sparta was acknowledged; and for nearly the whole period of her ascendancy, after the success of Ægospotamos, to her defeat at Mantinea, 362 B.C., her armies were commanded by Agesilaus, one of her bravest kings, and the friend of Xenophon. In the earlier years of this interval, Agesilaus maintained the conflict with Persia in Asia Minor, utterly routed the forces of the satraps opposed to him, and seriously meditated an expedition against the capital of the empire; when he was recalled to Greece by a confederacy formed against his country by Thebes and Athens, and defeated their armies at Coronæa. This victory was, however, balanced

by the success of the Athenian and Persian fleets, now in alliance, over that of Sparta in the naval fight off Cnidus, B.C. 394. Sparta was thus weakened in the Ægean, while the contest still went on in Greece, with Athens and Thebes. Persia derived immediate advantage from these contests, which her gold fomented among the Greek states; insomuch that Sparta was reduced to consent to a dishonourable peace with Persia, called the peace of Antalcidas, from the name of the Spartan negotiator, by which all the Asiatic Greek states, were surrendered once more to the rule of Persia. By this peace Sparta was enabled to concentrate her power in the contest for the superiority over all the Greek states, particularly Thebes and Athens. On the sea, Athens won the decisive victory of Naxos, B.C. 377, which wholly destroyed the Spartan fleet, and restored the maritime supremacy to Athens; while on land, the surrender of Thebes to the Spartans by treachery led to more energetic efforts on the part of Athens, which resulted in its re-capture. A new spirit of heroism was aroused in the Thebans by the cruel incursions of Sparta on their territory; and the celebrated Sacred Band was formed of devoted Theban patriots, headed by Pelopidas and Epaminondas, who succeeded in inflicting on Sparta humiliating defeats at Orchomenus and Leuctra B.C. 371; and afterwards retorted her ravages, in a succession of invasions into the Peloponnesus, which broke for ever the power of Sparta, and restored liberty and independence to the long-enslaved Messenians and Arcadians B.C. 362.

Thebes, from this time, though she had lost both her great patriots and generals, Epaminondas and Pelopidas, gained the ascendant in Greece; and though possessed of no maritime force, and having her power pretty evenly balanced with that of Athens, yet her ascendancy was so much an object of jealousy, that the Athenians permitted, to the eventual downfall of all Greece, the first attacks and machinations, to be carried on against Thebes, by Philip of Macedon. We have thus brought down the revolutions of all Greek history in connection with Sparta to the period of the reign of Philip, who succeeded to the throne of Macedon in the year B.C. 359. The whole period of Greek enterprise and collision with Persia, considered generally, from the battle of Platœa to this date, was about 130 years; of which the first seventy-three mark the supremacy of Athens, to the defeat of Ægospotamos; the next thirty, that of Sparta, to the loss of their

fleet at Naxos ; and the remainder, that of Thebes, and later, of Athens, from the battle of Leuctra, to the year of their common defeat by Philip, 338 B.C. We have now to trace, in an equally brief manner, the story of Athenian grandeur, to the same period.

The fortunes of the Athenian polity have been already alluded to, in the account given of the Persian monarchy, in its unsuccessful attempts upon the liberty of Greece, and the wonderful development of the Athenian energy and character, which ensued after the success and celebrity of the resistance made by Athens to both the Persian expeditions. The last of these was in the year 480 B.C. ; after which, it was mentioned, that the maritime power of Athens, natural to its position, was immediately augmented, and her supremacy conceded, in consequence of the efforts and sacrifices so nobly made in the general cause. The still formidable power of Persia, and the menacing position in which it stood, both to the Greek isles of the *Ægean*, and Greek states of Asia Minor, as well as to Greece proper itself, rendered a defensive confederacy indispensable to their safety ; and Athens was justly rewarded with the supreme direction of this alliance for the general defence of the Greek race. As the frontier state, eastward, of Greece, as the bulwark of Greek independence, as the vanguard and forlorn hope of the earlier Greek resistance, as the heroic victor in that resistance, and as in a manner consecrated, from this date, to the defence of Greece, the supremacy of Athens, now become powerful by her maritime resources, was a necessary consequence of her success ; assuming, always, her energy to be equal to the asserting this position. Had the Athenians been of feeble character, even success, in one or two conflicts, might only have resulted in brief celebrity, and a speedy relapse into humiliation and despair. The national character was different from this ; and the success achieved at Marathon and Salamis was the starting point of a long and brilliant career of development and national history, which has an imperishable place in the annals of the human race, and the consequences of which run on for ever in its progressive civilization. Such, and so situated was Athens, at that point of her history, at which some notice of her exertions and power was necessitated, in the review given of the attempts of Persia on the civilization of Europe.

But it is indispensable, now, in reviewing the history of the



loading Greek states, in the preparation and basis they afforded for the creation of the Macedonian empire, to trace the story of Athens, as of Sparta, from an earlier point, so that a clearly defined picture of Athenian fortunes, and Athenian development, may be traced, and the exact position of Athens in general history, and the character of her influence on the condition of the world, may, in some fair measure, be rendered intelligible. For it must be remembered, that the influence of Greece on the rest of nations, particularly on the literature and speculation of the age preceding Christianity, and on all European literature and thought from that period till now, is an influence in the main identified with, and centred in Athens; not in Greece generally; not in Sparta, Thebes or Corinth; but in the small colony of Ionians settled in Attica, a territory smaller than some English counties, extending from Mount Cithæron to Cape Sunium. Other states took part in the war of Greek independence, and thus bore their share in securing the *conditions* of Greek development, in enterprise, genius, and power; but the centre of that development in its chief element, the intellectual, and in its chief subsequent influence on the world, was Athens. If we except the Homeric poems, and the first Greek work in history, also products of Ionian genius in Asia Minor, nearly the whole sum of Greek literature was from the Ionians of Attica; and it was this literature, which the spread of Macedonian conquest diffused to Asia and Egypt, and of which the copious and defined language became the medium of the first version of the older Scriptures, and of the first compositions of the Christian revelation. These considerations will show how much attention is due to the history of Athens; and it may be added, that, as the civilization, the resources, and power of southern Greece were an indispensable preparation for the Macedonian conquests, so no state contributed more essentially to the development of these than the small state of Attica. Hence the origin, and successive stages of progress, of this polity of Athens, which, though centred on so narrow a territory, became so celebrated, as the antagonist of Persia, and the leading state of Greece, and, in its literature, became the fount of intelligence to all after ages, must have an interest, superior to that which attaches to any other state of antiquity, for those who can in any measure judge of its character and influence.

The earlier history of Athens dates from much the same traditional obscurity as that of Sparta. Cecrops is said to have been its founder, and to have arranged its first dispersed population into twelve communities or districts. This chief, by some ancient writers is said to be of Pelasgic origin; by others, to have been an Egyptian colonist from the city of Sais, and to have imported Egyptian art and usages into Attica. After him came Ion, the grandson of Hellen of Thessaly, the reputed founder of the Hellenic races, who disposed the population of Attica into four tribes. Theseus followed, who formed the unity of the tribes in one monarchy, and made Athens the seat of government. The monarchy, thus formed by Theseus, with its four classes, of the priesthood, warriors, husbandmen, and lowest populace, subsisted through a succession of kings, down to Codrus, the last of the kings of Attica, who is said to have voluntarily sacrificed his life to save his country in a war with the Dorians.

With Codrus ended the monarchical period of the small Attic state. After this came the form of supremacy denominated the Archonship, at first for life, then for ten years, after this annual, but still in a single chief, and, last of all, with the power divided among nine annual archons. The archonship for life continued still in the line of Theseus; Medon the son of Codrus, the last king, being the first archon; and the sovereignty was in effect the same, with only the change of name. It terminated, after a succession of eleven archons from Medon, still in the same hereditary order, in Alcmaeon, about the year B.C. 752. The next period is that of archons for ten years, which involved an important and even fundamental change in the presidency, tending to the still more popular form of the constitution, which, after a succession of four archons from Alcmaeon, it assumed in B.C. 682; when the archonship became annual, and elective, but still centred in a single ruler. At the date last named, the final great change in the directing power of the little Athenian state took place, which was that of dividing the rule, annually committed to one, into nine archonships, or public departments of government; the first archon being the president, and giving his name to the year of his command; the second having the direction of religious sacrifices; the third being the polemarch, entitled to command in war; and the remaining six being legislators or judges, and called Thesmo-

thetæ. This form of the constitution, as to the sovereign command in the Athenian state, was generally that which it retained to the last period of its history, and which was the basis of its popular character, as distinguished from other states of Greece. Further popular changes followed; but at first, the archonship, being held by the higher classes or tribes, the rule was in its essence aristocratic, though being annually changed, it was in great degree amenable to popular feeling, and therefore mild and peaceful. Yet much of disorder prevailed, while the magistrates pronounced decrees at their own discretion. This led to an attempt at more definite legislation; and Draco was entrusted with the task of forming the first written laws for Athenians. His legislation is dated at B.C. 624; and, although its promulgation was a grand advance on the discretionary decrees of magistrates, yet its severe penalties overwhelmed the community with terror and misery, and led to a popular insurrection, like those of early Roman history, under Cylon, which, however, at the time, ended in defeat.

The condition of the Attic population had now become one of wide-spread misery, disorder, and despair. The lower class was crushed to the earth by the severity of the laws, and by the general oppression exerted by the wealthier proprietors of land. It was at this crisis, that Solon was entrusted, by the unanimous suffrage of all ranks, with the task of revising the legislation of Draco, now an exile at Ægina, and of reconstructing the whole fabric of the Athenian constitution; and to the singularly well-balanced, yet popular constitution, which he succeeded in framing, and imposing, under the ratifications of a solemn oath, at Athens, were the Athenian people indebted for that after development of their fortunes and history, which gave them so much celebrity and enduring influence. The year 595 B.C. is assigned as the date of his legislation, and at this era it is, that we seem to arrive at the first definite date in Athenian history; as his legislation became a memorable epoch, by its entire framework of a constitution, which survived in its main elements through all periods of their national fortunes. Solon's rank, he being a descendant of Codrus, and, still more, his character for wisdom and humanity, pointed him out as the fitting mediator between the conflicting orders at Athens. He was in genius and intellect a high and characteristic representative, by anticipation, of the subsequent intellectual

development of the Athenian people, and worthy to stand at the head of its grandeur. He was a bard, a hero, a statesman, a legislator, and a philosopher, being ranked as one of the seven wisest men among the ancient Greeks. By a brief poem which he wrote, and recited in the Agora, on the loss of Salamis, his native island, through the usurpation of Megara, he roused the Athenians in a mass to frenzy for its recovery, and headed the expedition for its successful re-capture.

Having accepted the high trust committed to him, he devised every arrangement in a spirit of humanity, with a considerate caution, and with a comprehensive regard to the interests of various classes; and ultimately produced a constitution, which in the event, showed itself eminently adapted to ensure the peace and welfare of his countrymen, and to elicit the fullest expansion of the Athenian character and genius. He released the agricultural and labouring class from the tyranny of the nobles. He rescued the poor, oppressed with debt, from the servitude imposed on them by wealthy creditors, by the substitution of a moderate rate of interest. He altered the divisions of the population from that of classes, or tribes, according to birth and rank, with hereditary rights, into classes determined by property, which admitted citizens from all ranks, and gave to each his influence in the state, according to the rate of his property and contributions, and not according to the ancient ascendancy of birth. The population he thus arranged into four orders, disposed according to their incomes, and having duties and expenditure in the state assigned them respectively in proportion to their resources. The first and wealthiest class were eligible to the chief offices in the state; the second furnished its cavalry; the third, a less, rich but more numerous class, its heavy armed infantry; and the fourth, the poorer and most numerous order, served as light troopers and mariners. The ancient magistracies, or nine annual archonships, were retained, but were made responsible to laws, and to other popular councils which were now added, or perhaps some of them only confirmed. These consisted of four great bodies or assemblies; the first, the senate of 400, increased afterwards by Cleisthenes to 500, from among the higher class, whose province it was to revise and prepare laws for ratification, if approved of, by the general assembly of the Athenians; and sections of which, called Prytanes,

served in turn through the year as judges in the courts of judicature. The second was the great council of 6,000 citizens, called *Heliaea*, which was annually elected by lot, from among citizens above the age of thirty, and which, being divided into smaller courts, determined all questions of offences against the state. There was a third council, that of the *Areopagus*, which was held in the open air on Mars' Hill, and took cognizance, under oath, of all civil crimes and wrongs. Finally, in addition to all these, was the general assembly, or *Ecclesia*, open to all Athenians above the age of twenty, which had the ultimate decision of all questions of state, and of all measures of legislation. Thus last constituted the democratic base of the Athenian polity, capable of limiting and controlling the rest, but balanced with much effect by the senate and courts of judicature already named.

Such was the general framework of the constitution given by Solon to the Athenian state, and which remained unchanged, in its chief arrangements, to the time of the fall of Grecian liberty before the arms of Philip of Macedon and Alexander. It had a continuance of about 260 years, from 594 B.C. to about 332 B.C.; and within this space of time we are to reckon the bright era of Athenian fortunes; not all of it equally prosperous in the exterior circumstances of wealth and power, but the whole a period of progressive brilliance in arts, in genius, and in general intelligence. That the constitution of Solon, which allowed of so much free individual action to Athenian citizens, which afforded to each, in virtue of the determination of rank according to property, the incentive and possibility of reaching the higher positions in the state, by industry and talent, and which yet balanced this democratic freedom, by the grave and weighty authority of the senate, and the court of the *Areopagus*—that this form of constitution was one of the great causes conducive to the wonderful unfolding of Athenian genius which ensued, cannot be reasonably doubted. Whatever of peculiarity, if any, be imputed to the temperament of the Athenian mind and character, the chief causes of that free and higher intellectual activity which illustrates their history, and distinguishes it from that of the other contemporary states of Greece, must be sought in their political constitution, and in other accidental circumstances of their position, such as the facility and means for

gaining maritime power and dominion, when their territory on land was restricted to the small triangular projection of Attica. It is impossible, we think, to avoid this inference in favour of Solon's constitution, as one of the chief conditions of Athenian development. To some peculiarity, under the over-ruling determination of Providence, we *must* ascribe this development; and that must be either in Athenian character as distinguished from that of other Greeks, or in their polity and local situation. We do not think such difference to be found in any high degree in the first; and must therefore rest the solution on the two last, and in, perhaps, the largest measure on the former of them, the Athenian polity established by Solon, or rather grafted by him on the preceding constitution, which had been attained in the annual rule of their archons. The free polity of Athens was the fountain-head of their subsequent intellectual activity and celebrity.

We have to remark upon the constitution of Solon further, that it was the first example in history—the form of polity given by Divine command to the Israelites excepted—which had been attempted of a free democracy, balanced by the rule of archons and a senate. All the states formed amongst nations, had, till now, been monarchies, or, some few, oligarchies. The experiment had not been made, at least on any large scale, or in any determinate arrangement, of a regulated democracy. Herodotus mentions that, on the expulsion of the usurper Smerdis the Magian from the Persian throne, by the seven nobles of whom Darius Hystaspes was the chief, very formal deliberations ensued amongst them, respecting the merits of the three forms of polity, a monarchy, an aristocracy, and a democracy, as to which it would be most fitting to give to the Persian empire, now left without a ruler by the death of Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. However improbable the occurrence of such deliberations, Herodotus emphatically asserts that they took place, and even gives the substance of the argument in favour of each form, as maintained by each of the nobles. Otanes, who had taken the lead in the measures which led to the detection of Smerdis, as being the Magian adventurer, with his mutilated ears, and not the son of Cyrus, argued earnestly in favour of a democracy; Gobryas, and others, expounded the advantages of an aristocracy, or the rule of a council of nobles; Darius, reciting the defects in each of these forms, on even the

showing of their opponents respectively, insisted on the vastly higher merits of a monarchy; and ultimately won the assent of all, that monarchy should be resumed and perpetuated in Persia. In all this account, Herodotus probably expanded some slight traditions into history; and the reasonings he recounts certainly bear the cast rather of the clear and concise exposition of the Athenian schools, and of the times in which the historian wrote, being long after the age of Solon, and some fifty years after that of Darius. Whether, however, the notion of a democracy entered into the deliberations of the noble Persian conspirators or not, the experiment had already been realized at Athens, and it was the first conspicuous example of such a form of polity in the history of the world. Nor can it be doubted that Athens, or rather Solon as her chief, exerted on this ground a lasting and important influence on the history of Europe, second only to that which the intellect of her poets, orators, and philosophers exerted on the progress of the human mind, in subsequent ages, and other countries.

However imperfect was the constitution thus given, it was the first enlargement of human society from the severe and cruel restraints of monarchy to a freer social and political existence. The constitution of Sparta continued in effect a monarchy, controlled by a dominant aristocracy of five ephori and thirty senators: Corinth was an aristocracy: so were most of the states of Greece, and the Greek colonies in other lands, in Sicily, in Italy, as well as in Asia Minor. They were all either aristocracies, or alternated between a tyranny and an oligarchy. At Athens alone, we discern in ancient history, at this date, the establishment of a government essentially free and equal among all its citizens.

Having enlarged upon the origin of the political constitution of Athens, it is not our design to give more than the outline of her history, in its chief epochs. Solon was appointed archon B.C. 594, and in this high position appears to have remained for the long space of twenty-two years, during which he had ample opportunity to judge of the effect of each part of the new arrangements he had framed, and by his authority and weight of character held the people steadfast in the observance of new regulations. Thus his influence availed to give stability, and the authority of use, to that constitution which his comprehensive intellect had planned. To fix the allegiance of Athenians to this constitution more firmly, Solon determined to withdraw from

Athens, and exacted an oath from all orders, that the constitution should be preserved inviolate during his absence—an absence which he prolonged to the period of ten years, during which he visited the various states of Asia Minor, where he formed friendships with Thales of Miletus, and Croesus, the opulent monarch of Lydia; and afterwards passed over to Egypt, that land of ancient lore and ancient monuments, which, to enlightened Greeks, offered objects of deeper interest than any other, and whose monuments spoke even to *them* of an unfathomable antiquity. He is said to have returned B.C. 562; but whether he resumed any power in the state is uncertain. The probability is, that he did not; for two years later, 560 B.C., Pisistratus, whose mother was the first cousin of Solon, assumed the sovereign rule at Athens, though probably without abolishing the various institutions of the state. Solon died in the year after the first usurpation of his relative Pisistratus, whose power after various struggles was confirmed, and continued till his death, 527 B.C., after a reign of thirty-three years.

Although the rule of Pisistratus is called, after the ancient Greek designation, a tyranny, this name did not involve necessarily any extreme severity, or violation of rights, except in the single, though permanent fact of his holding the supremacy, contrary to the institution of annual archonship. His reign may have been even useful to his country politically, like that of Solon, in giving steadiness to the rising enterprise of a growing people, and promoting the general advance of industry and commerce. In one respect Pisistratus performed the highest service to his countrymen, and to Greece generally. He collected the poems of Homer, and caused them to be transcribed and arranged; whereas, before this time, they are said, though with extreme improbability, to have been preserved solely in the memory of rhapsodists, and to have been transmitted from one age to another in the channel of popular recital. Thus, at least, Pisistratus, in a manner, inaugurated the intellectual career of Athens, and infused the spirit of Homeric invention, fire, and sublimity into the popular mind. The wonderful poems, which all following ages have studied, and all nations have pronounced the noblest of merely human products of genius, were made the familiar mental treasure of every Athenian, and formed the oft-recited ballad-literature of his mother tongue. It is not



easy to compute how great an influence this measure, of rendering popular the Homeric poems, may have exerted on the minds of the Athenians. That it constituted an element of highest value in awakening intellect, at this early date of their history, cannot be doubted. The habitual reading, or recital, of the Homeric descriptions of ancient Greek valour, could not permit the national mind to be dormant.

When Pisistratus died, his sons Hippias and Hipparchus endeavoured to retain the sovereignty which their father had so long held; but an insurrection, headed by Harmodius and Aristogeiton, though fatal to themselves, resulted in the downfall of the tyranny of the two brothers. Hipparchus was slain; and Hippias, a few years after, retreated from Greece to the court of Darius, king of Persia, to solicit that monarch's aid in restoring him to power. Meanwhile the Greek towns of Asia Minor had revolted, and Athens sent forces to their assistance, which made the breach with Persia irreparable, and determined Darius to bring the whole force of his vast empire to bear upon Greece, and pre-eminently upon Athens. The Persian expeditions followed, the first sent by Darius, which was defeated at Marathon, and the second led by Xerxes himself, ten years later, which terminated in the Persian defeats of Salamis, and Plataea, 480 and 479 B.C. In these struggles with Persia, the earlier names appear of those eminent generals and statesmen who rose in succession to guide the affairs of Athens; Miltiades, who commanded at Marathon; Cimon his son, who won the celebrated sea-fight of the Eurymedon; Themistocles, who commanded the fleet at Salamis, and Aristides the Just, who commanded at Plataea.

After the celebrated victories which annihilated the attacking forces of Persia, and put an end to her aggressions on the rising civilization of Europe, and in which Athens bore so illustrious a part, those decisive measures were undertaken and carried into effect by Themistocles, which were indispensable, the one for securing the strength and independence of Athens on land, and the other for giving her a maritime empire, by the formation of a safe and spacious harbour on the coast, and by greatly enlarging her navy. These were the fortifications around the city, and next, the two long walls of five miles in length, which were carried down, in widening angle, from the fortifications, till they terminated, the one, on the harbour of the Piræus, and the

other on the Phalerum ; thus connecting both havens with the city. The maritime ascendance of Athens commenced after this, and her navy became the largest and best equipped of those of all the Greek states. Athens was elected by the Greek states and islands of the *Ægean* as the head of the confederacy against Persia, still necessary for their common defence ; and from having the absolute command of the combined forces, it gradually arrogated to itself the full sovereignty over the allied states, first by securing the common treasure deposited at Delos, next by rendering her courts of judicature supreme in matters of appeal from the smaller states, and last by disarming the smaller states, appropriating their navies to her own use, and substituting annual tribute in place of the former contingent of military and naval force. Thus Athens held a potent, though not extensive empire in the *Ægean*, from Byzantium to the islands of Naxos and Paros ; and, in consequence of the resources and wealth accumulated by commerce in these maritime states, Athens became a powerful antagonist against Persia even on the Asiatic coast.

The period which follows, from 477 B.C., when Athens was formally invested with the command in the Greek confederacy, to 404 B.C., when Sparta became triumphant, is called the period of the supremacy of Athens, and thus embraces a space of seventy-three years. Yet the latter part of it was one of struggle and disaster, in the prolonged contest of the Peloponnesian war, conducted by Sparta and Corinth, and many of the revolted states, against Athens, from 431 to 404 B.C., and terminating in her humiliation for a time. But the era of her power and grandeur abroad was illustrated, at home, by that outburst of national genius, which has given Athens a far higher and more enduring distinction than all political greatness could confer. Then arose the succession of her sublime tragic poets, whose compositions are still models for the world, *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*. The first successful composition of *Æschylus*, which gained the prize of tragedy, appeared only six years after the battle of Marathon. That great poet himself had even taken part as warrior in the patriotic struggles of his country, and had fought, by the side of his two brothers, in the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea ; and the earliest of his extant tragedies, the *Persæ*, celebrates the overthrow of Xerxes' fleet around the rocks of Salamis. *Sophocles* read his

first tragedy in 468 B.C., and his last was published five years after his decease in 401 B.C. Meanwhile, Euripides, the younger rival of these sublime poets, born at Salamis on the very day of its great battle, had produced his first composition in 441 B.C., and continued to exhibit fresh tragedies to the year 406 B.C. These compositions of the Greek tragic poets merit the most conspicuous place in Greek history, not only on account of their unrivalled sublimity as works of genius, and that lofty moral tone which generally pervades them, but further because of the influence they undoubtedly exerted on the unfolding genius and intelligence of Athens in the morning of her history, as well as on account of the permanent influence they still exert by their innate poetic inspiration, and by the standard of a pure and exquisite taste which they maintain, for the emulation of posterity.

These are the chief names in tragic poetry, whose works, though but fragments of the whole, have come down to modern times. But these are not all of those who illustrate the intellectual glory of Athens in the period of her political ascendancy. For the school of Athenian philosophy commenced, within the same interval, with Socrates, who discoursed a practical wisdom, the soundest which unassisted reason could attain, in the period from, at least, 440 B.C., to his death, 399 B.C. His teachings were continued and sustained by his friend and disciple Plato, who, a hearer for the last ten years of the life of Socrates, expounded the doctrine of the Grecian sage after his death, in public lectures at Athens, and afterwards in writings, destined to endure, probably, while time shall last. These references to the intellectual splendour of the Athenian people would be incomplete, if we omitted allusion to the public oratory and the historical compositions of this time, and particularly those works of art, in sculpture, painting, and architecture, which were produced within the same period, and which rendered Athens a theatre of beautiful representations, in all the forms of sublime proportion, of varied imitation, and of chaste colouring, that could delight the eye, and enchant the imagination. Phidias was the friend of Pericles, and was commissioned by him with the superintendence of the chief public works raised in Athens during his administration; particularly those on the Acropolis, of which many of the sculptured ornaments are now to be seen in the British Museum. Praxiteles was of a later period, but equally eminent in the exquisite perfection of his productions.

Thus far we have briefly noticed the wonderful development of Athenian power, art, genius, and philosophy, within the period generally of the first supremacy of Athens, dating nearly from the victories won against Persia, and descending to the close of the Peloponnesian war. In reverting to the political history of Athens within this interval, we have to notice more distinctly the brilliant period of the forty years' administration of Pericles, which, commencing about the year 469 B.C., continued to his death, in 429 B.C., a few years after the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, which was to prove so fatal to his country. His administration is justly reckoned as marking the brightest era of Athenian prosperity and splendour, both in her political power, and in the progress of art and intelligence. He succeeded to power, or a continued chief archonship, soon after the death of Cimon, the son of Miltiades; and while equally eminent with his predecessors, Cimon, Aristides, and Themistocles, as a general, he added, to the reputation of his high military qualities, the sounder merit of the patronage of art and genius, and the distinction of an orator, the first in Athens who prepared his speeches in writing. He thus gave commencement to that argumentative oratory, which attained its climax nearly a century later in Demosthenes. Pericles, perceiving that a conflict was imminent with Sparta, and the western states of Greece, which now were become impatient of the Athenian supremacy, gave his consent to those measures against Corinth, which brought on a general war; but was taken off by death, during the plague which visited Athens, in the third year of the struggle, leaving no successor of equal genius to sustain the critical fortunes of his country.

The Peloponnesian war, which lasted from B.C. 431 to B.C. 404, is the most memorable epoch in Greek history, as it involved on the side, either of Athens, or of Sparta, all the Greek states, both in Greece and those of the Greek isles, and the cities of Asia Minor. It spread even to Sicily, where the defeat of the Athenians before Syracuse, which had the support of Sparta, gave the first deadly blow to the Athenian power. The annual expeditions of the Spartan armies into Attica followed, which swept away its harvests, and confined the population within the walls of the city; and at last the capture of the Athenian fleet at Ægospotamos in the Hellespont, by stratagem when the crews were on shore, annihilated the resource of Athens on the sea, and

terminated the long struggle by the seizure of the city, and destruction of its fortifications, 404 B.C.

Athens was now subjected, though only for a few months, to the rule of what are called the Thirty Tyrants, who were those of the Athenian citizens whom Lysander the Spartan general appointed to rule in the interest of Sparta. The violence and cruelty of these men, to which Socrates bears testimony, drove many families into exile, and at last brought on a revolution, which again reunited Athenians under the forms of their ancient constitution. Thrasybulus, joined by about 700 other exiles, seized the opportunity of the general discontent and disorder to land in the Piræus, attacked and defeated the forces of the Tyrants, and expelled them from the city. Athens again regained independence, her fortifications were rebuilt, and gradually her position was strengthened and power enlarged. Further contests ensued with Sparta, in which Athens received aid from Persia, now become apprehensive of Spartan power. At last by a decisive victory of the Athenian and Persian fleets under Conon, in the sea-fight off Cnidus, B.C. 394, the Spartan fleet was destroyed, and the maritime ascendancy of Athens restored. Although at first only a limited number of the isles, formerly under her command, were now recovered, yet from this time, her power was gradually extended; and that second period of her grandeur was introduced, which, with less of political greatness, is equally illustrious for its intellectual progress and culture. This whole period extends from B.C. 390, to B.C. 338. The earlier part of it from B.C. 380, to B.C. 359, includes the struggle of Thebes with Sparta, to which we have formerly alluded; in which Athens aided at first in the liberation of Thebes, and the Thebans themselves afterwards, led on by their patriot hero Epaminondas, carried the war with success against their oppressors into the Peloponnesus, and defeating Sparta at Mantinæa, compelled it to release the Arcadians and Messenians from their long servitude of three centuries, and restored liberty to the Peloponnesus. The second part of the same interval of Athenian power includes the two Sacred Wars, in which Philip of Macedon contrived to take part, and ends with his final victory over Athens and all Greece, in the battle of Chæronea.

With respect to the *interior* history of Athens, amid the perils and vicissitudes of her later struggles, it is a point of much in-

terest to know, whether there was any suspension or decline of her *intellectual* progress, or what was the character of that progress, if still maintained. And the answer is that, through this whole period, it still advanced, and became more and more brilliant. Political reverse, so long as freedom survived, did not abate, much less extinguish, the fervour of intellectual activity; although that activity manifested itself in new modes, and new directions. The first blaze of Athenian genius was manifested in its tragic poetry; next followed the compositions of its chief historians, Thucydides and Xenophon; after these flourished the celebrated schools of moral speculation, under Plato, Aristotle, and their successors; last of all, was fully developed the Athenian genius for oratory, which reached its unrivalled perfection and brilliance in Demosthenes, in the last years of Greek independence. This is the general order of the unfolding of Athenian intellectual history, in respect at least of its written remains; and though each form of intellectual effort may have been continued, and run on parallel to the others, yet the commencing era, or the full brilliance of each, took place much in the order stated. The tragic compositions of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides preceded the histories of Thucydides and Xenophon; the history of Thucydides, again, was anterior in date to the public teachings of Plato, much more to his writings; the philosophy of Plato, finally, long preceded the oratory of Demosthenes; although Lysias, the first great rhetorician of Greece, was a contemporary of Socrates and Plato. The chief fact may perhaps be better represented by saying, that poetry at Athens, that is, its highest and most perfect creations, preceded speculation and narrative; and that speculation preceded oratory, in its fullest splendour.

Still more is it worthy of remark, that activity of thought, in all modes of exertion, at Athens, was one still advancing, in amplitude, variety, and brilliance, through the whole period of her independence, and we may even add, for near a century later, in philosophical speculation, and literary culture, as well as in the productions of art. This fact is most striking in the history of a single small state. Without liberty, without independence, without political greatness and empire, the intellect of Athens had perhaps never been kindled, or its progressive development sustained. Enterprise abroad, political power, peril and success,

roused the national mind ; and security and freedom of individual action and speech at home, afforded the conditions of every form of intellectual effort. The result of the whole was, a succession of creations of genius from this single people, and in the comparatively brief limit of their history, in nearly every form of composition, which, in sublimity, and an exquisite perfection, are still unsurpassed by the intellectual products of all succeeding times.

This singular force of Greek genius at Athens it was which created a literature, such as all nations became eager to study, and which made the diffusion of the language of Greece, equally with the conquests of Alexander, a fact of so much moment in the age preceding the Christian era. This period of Athenian development must in fact be considered as the age of the brightest gleam of unassisted reason and genius ever manifested in human history. Had this age *not* been, or had the record, traditions, and influence of it been extinguished, and blotted out from memory, how much had the intellectual life of men, of nations, been changed ! What millions of minds have meditated the literature, the thought, evolved in this period, and emulated its beauty, refinement, sublimity, and clearness.

Thus this age became *creative* of succeeding thought and genius in an inconceivable degree, and doubtless was intended for this service by Providence. Its productions are still unequalled models in poetry, in history, in philosophic speculation, in oratory, and in works of art : they are still inexhaustible in their inspiration—in their power to kindle the intellect and fancy to analogous thought. Its language, unmixed with foreign accretions, borrowing nothing from without, but, in its most composite and expanded forms, built up wholly of primary elements, and thus sparkling with an instantaneous significance in every particle and syllable, and by new and flexible combinations adapted to every turn of thought and every shade of meaning, became the most perfect medium of human intelligence, the most perfect instrument of thought and speech ever bestowed on men ; alike fitted for all themes and subjects, abstract, comprehensive, or graphic ; variable, nervous, and free ; condensed, refined, and picturesque ; and transparent all, as the clear rivulet which hurries over its pebbly channel. *This* was the language, which Divine Providence destined to be the medium of the last and

most perfect of the revelations to be promulgated to man. Into the speech of Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle, were rendered the ancient Hebrew Scriptures, nearly two centuries before the advent of Christ; and the histories of our blessed Lord's life and teachings, together with the expositions of the entire scheme of Christian doctrine, were cast in the mould of speech, elaborated and perfected in the schools and the agora of Athens.

We must now resume our narrative of the general progress of events in Greece, to the point when Philip of Macedon became master of its liberties, and was preparing to combine its forces against the Persian throne. And, as Athens bore as conspicuous a part in the last era of Greek independence, in the struggle against Philip, as she had done in the first resistance to Persia, the general story of Greece is principally identified with that of the Athenian polity, and is to be chiefly tracked in the channel of Athenian affairs. Two grand epochs of its history have already passed before us in review; the period of her ascendancy, from 477 to 404 B.C., terminating in the Peloponnesian war, and in a brief subjection to Sparta; the next, that of her gradually recovered power after the battle of Cnidus, and her alliance with Thebes; after which, the latter state broke the power of Sparta, and liberated the central and western states of the Peloponnese, by the victory of Epaminondas at Mantinea, B.C. 362. The third division of Athenian history is comprised in the ensuing period, of some twenty-five years from this date, in which Athens, jealous of Thebes, gives at first her alliance to Sparta, but very soon becomes alarmed for the common safety of all Greece, in consequence of the activity and aggressive policy of Philip of Macedon. This is the last brilliant era of Athenian history, and, though not illustrated by many successes in war against Philip, is one which intellectually is more memorable perhaps than any other, and worthy to close the story of Athens, being adorned with a splendour of genius and patriotism, equal to the lustre of its commencing periods. It is the age of Demosthenes, whose oratory, the most perfect that the world has yet beheld, sustained and animated the last efforts of Greek independence, against the northern power which was ultimately destined to overwhelm it.

The rise of a great kingdom on the north of Thessaly, and among a people esteemed almost foreign to the common unity of



the Hellenic race, though speaking the Greek language, was an event wholly remote from the calculations of politicians in Athens, Thebes, or Sparta; and nothing but the endless strifes and wars carried on between the factions in Thessaly, and between the states south of its mountain passes, could have permitted the growth of the Macedonian power, much less facilitated its interference in the affairs of Greece proper. Macedonia, it is true, had wider limits of expansion in territory towards Epirus, and eastward towards Thrace; but its aggressions in the latter direction could have been effectually arrested, if Thebes, Athens, and Sparta had well understood their common interests, or, perhaps, even if Athens had been united in herself, and her policy had not been enfeebled, and rendered undecided and wavering, by the factions, which the gold of Philip nourished, by the timid policy of some of her orators, and the treacherous aims of others. Demosthenes almost alone, of her great statesmen, clearly understood and honestly pursued the true interests of his country, and of Greece at large; and he laboured with an ardent oratory, worthy of the crisis, to unite all parties and all states in watchful resistance to Macedon. He strove, at each advance of Philip's intrigues or encroachment, to fire Greece with his own patriotism, and to arm all states against the common enemy; but in this his success was partial, and came at last too late.

The kingdom of Macedon had, till the accession of Philip, shared scarcely at all in the general system of Greek policy. In the period of the expeditions of Darius and Xerxes across the Hellespont, Macedon had yielded to the overwhelming force of Persia; and together with Thrace had become, for a brief period, a European province, or at least a tributary ally, of the great Persian empire. Alexander I. of Macedon, the son of Amyntas, had even been obliged to join the expedition of Xerxes, with the forces of his kingdom, although secretly in favour of the Greeks. On the eve of the battle of Platæa, he rode at midnight into the Athenian camp, gave Aristides information of the intended attack of Mardonius on the morrow, and of the exhausted state of the Persian supplies, and urged the strenuous resistance of the Greeks. When the defeat of Mardonius, and his death, ensued on the following day, and the routed thousands of Persia turned their flight homewards,

Alexander openly took part in the pursuit, and inflicted on their retreat all the injury in his power. For this he was rewarded with the franchise of an Athenian citizen, and from this period there commenced an hereditary friendship between the kings of Macedon and the Athenian state. Nothing of interest, as connected with Greek history, occurred in the annals of Macedon, for the next hundred years. Its power was, however, silently augmenting, by the gradual extension of territory in Epirus, and also in Thrace.

When Philip, the youngest son of Amyntas II. and Eurydice, usurped the throne, 359 B.C., in violation of the right of his nephew Amyntas, an infant son of his elder brother, the kingdom had attained so much consolidation and strength, that the prospect presented itself, for the first time, to the aspiring young monarch, of extending his dominions by more solid acquisitions in Chalcidice and Thessaly, and of giving Macedon preponderance among the Greek states. He first directed his attention to the discipline and augmentation of his army, and formed the celebrated Macedonian phalanx, which afterwards bore down every force opposed to it. He next attacked the Greek cities on the Macedonian coast and in the Thermaic Gulf, and successively captured Amphipolis, Pydna, Potidea, Methone, and last of all Olynthus; in reference to which city, the celebrated Olynthiac orations of Demosthenes were delivered, urging the Athenians to send a fleet to its assistance. The policy of Philip was to endeavour to keep the Greek states inactive, and to preclude suspicion of his designs everywhere as far as he could, and especially in the powerful state of Athens, whose maritime force enabled it to interpose the earliest resistance to his plans. For this purpose he employed every deception and pretence, with the utmost boldness and assurance, both in alleging special grounds of quarrel against the smaller states which he first attacked, and in professing the highest reverence for treaties, and in particular, the highest regard for the good opinion of Athens. He lavished gold without limit by means of his ambassadors and emissaries at Athens, both among the leaders of factions, and amongst the citizens generally; so that the eminent statesmen who were faithful to their country, and had at heart the interests of all Greece, Demosthenes, Hypérides, and a few others, had to contend at once with the factions bribed in favour of a passive policy at home, and again, when

their countrymen were at last roused to action, had to direct their measures with promptness and sagacity against a monarch whose decision and movements usually outstripped even the suspicions of his shrewdest opponents. Without dwelling on the various measures promoted by Demosthenes, or on the patriotism which he united to such unrivalled gifts as an orator, it is only necessary to mention, that the encroachments of Philip still gained ground; while, on the other hand, the persevering efforts of Demosthenes to inspire his countrymen with heroic determination, and to fire all Greece with a general enthusiasm in the contest for its independence, were successful in averting for many years the fate, which the factions and divisions of Greece at last brought upon it.

For years, the armies of Philip were kept north of the pass of Thermopylæ, and he was obliged to limit his ambition to the conquest of different cities in Thessaly. His successful intrigues, in the Amphictyonic council, with the representatives of Thebes, Sparta, and other smaller states, which still were more envious of Athens than alarmed for Greece, gained for him admission into Bœotia, as the general in command of the combined forces leagued against Phocis in the Sacred War; and this war being terminated, Philip, now secure of his position, for a time succeeded in preventing the league of Athens and Thebes. At last, when these states combined in the struggle for their common liberties, though successful in two battles against Philip, in the third, the battle of Chaeronea, they were utterly defeated, and Greece fell for ever from her position as a free country. Thebes was treated with severity by the conqueror; but Athens, while reduced to the same subjection, received milder treatment. This was in 338 B.C. Thus fell the power of the Greek states; thus liberty was extinguished, and with it the glorious epoch of Greek enterprise and genius. At this point ceases the history of Greece: henceforward, all the Greek states, whose rivalry and civilization form so bright a page in ancient story, became tributary to Philip, and an integral part of the kingdom of Macedon.

The whole period of Greek independence and intellectual advancement, if dated from the victories which repelled the power of Persia, and brought down to the defeat which made Greece a vassal of Macedon, is comparatively a very brief one,

extending only to about 150 years. This was the space of time in which Athens flourished, and in which all of splendour in the intellectual history of Athens was unfolded. All her chief poets, historians, philosophers, orators, appeared within the brief limit we have mentioned. Before the victories of Marathon and Salamis, no great tragic poet or philosopher appeared—none at least whose works have survived; and after the battle of Chæronea, which silenced the voice of Demosthenes, the glory of Athenian genius declined. The schools of philosophy were continued, and rhetoricians taught the principles of oratory down to the time of Cicero, and even to the Christian era; but the bright age of the highest Greek creations was past. After the battle of Chæronea, no tragic poet arose to rank with Euripides and his predecessors; no philosopher to rank with Plato and Aristotle, no historian to vie with Xenophon and Thucydides, if perhaps we except Polybius; no orator to emulate the sublime daring of Demosthenes. Yet the *results* of the preceding age of highest intellectual splendour remained, in the general high character of Greek intelligence and cultivation; in its schools of philosophy, where the doctrines of Aristotle, Plato, and Zeno continued to be expounded; in the sects of philosophy, which gave a new direction and activity to the human mind; in its schools of rhetoric, to which youths from all lands resorted, to acquire the last finish of dialectic art; and in its schools of art, in sculpture, architecture, painting, which still at Athens surpassed the reach of other nations. But, to return to the effect of the victory of Philip at Chæronea, we repeat, that it set limit on the era of all that was pre-eminent and most perfect in the productions of Greek genius at Athens, where, as we have already stated, the grandest development of Greek genius exclusively took place; for it was in that small territory of Attica, and within the comparatively brief interval named, that all the highest productions of Greek intellect, if we except those of Homer, Herodotus, and Pindar, were given forth, and that bright culmination of genius was realized, which transcends in some respects that of any other period in the world's history.

We must now turn our thoughts to Macedon, and follow the advance of that new European power which was destined to overwhelm Asia with its force, to overturn the great Persian empire, to establish a Greek empire in its place, which should stretch beyond

the Indus, and to introduce and diffuse Greek civilization, Greek literature, Greek laws and usages, and the Greek language, through the chief cities, at least, of western Asia and of Egypt.

Very soon after Philip had made himself master of all Greece, from Mount Hæmus to the Malean Cape, and also of the greater part of Thrace, it was announced by him as his determination, to lead the entire force of Greece against Persia. How early it was, that a project of this immense difficulty had entered into his schemes of aggrandizement, does not appear; perhaps, not till after the battle which gave him the command of the ancient Greek states. Such a purpose had been formed, as we have already mentioned, by the Spartan king and general Agesilaus, about sixty years before, but was suddenly foiled by the war which Persia contrived, by lavish supplies of gold, to kindle against his own country, on the part of Thebes and Athens. The secret of the inferiority of the Asiatic armies, when matched against the disciplined valour of Europeans, and of the weakness of the Persian empire at its centre, had become already known, in the expedition of the ten thousand with Cyrus the younger, when, in the battle of Cunaxa, the Greek force put to flight, even by the terror of their advance and war psan, the vast forces arrayed in their front, and when afterwards, though Cyrus was no more, and their Asiatic allies had deserted them, they defied the menace of Artaxerxes, and safely effected their retreat northwards along the Tigris, till they reached Trebizond on the Euxine.

Doubtless the idea of Asiatic conquest had, from this time, become familiar to Greek politicians, but still rather as a faint possibility, or even imagination, than as a project to be practically entertained. In fact, *till* such an improbable event should happen, as should *unite Greece under one command*—an event, the thought of which was execrated by every statesman, unless such command centred in his *own* state—the attempt upon Persia was one utterly beyond all calculation of success. If made by any single state, such as Sparta, it would be instantly the interest of the other states to prevent its success. The subjugation of all of them under one European master had little entered into sober calculation, till the aggressions and conquests of Philip, supported by the more numerous and even harder populations of Macedon and Illyricum, gave the first alarm, which, in no long period, was so unhappily realized. This conquest, fatal to Greece, yet gave

reality to the supposition we have stated, that of Greek unity, as the indispensable condition of any hopeful attempt against Asia ; and no sooner was the mastery over Greece gained, than the thought flashed upon the restless imagination of Philip, that from Chæronea was but a step to the throne of Persia, that Asia could now be beaten to the dust before the forces of Europe, and the desolating expeditions of Darius and Xerxes avenged. It is indeed just possible, that he had dimly revolved this grand project even some years previous to his successes in Greece, when pushing eastward his conquests in Thrace ; but, at least, immediately after his final victory over Athens and Thebes, his purpose was definitively formed, to array all the forces of Greece in an expedition across the Hellespont.

In the spring following, therefore, he summoned a congress of the Greek states at Corinth ; to which all sent deputies, with the exception of Sparta, which for some time held itself aloof in sullen pride, fear, and irresolution. It should be mentioned, that although Philip had become in effect absolute master of all Greece, the policy pursued by him was still to treat the Greek states with the utmost reserve and leniency, and to respect the ancient constitution in each ; which accordingly subsisted till some years after the accession of his son. Sparta had her kings, Ephori, and Senate, as of old, and Athens her republican constitution, and popular assemblies ; the melancholy difference was, that their deliberations were no longer free, and that the policy of each was under the control of the conqueror. Towards Athens, Philip showed a regard and even reverence, expressive of the estimation felt for the noblest state of Greece. Such also was the policy, still more enthusiastically manifested towards Athens by his son Alexander, whose preceptor had been a disciple of Plato, and afterwards taught for years in the Lyceum at Athens, and by his philosophic systems founded an empire over the human mind, which far surpassed in endurance the conquests of his Macedonian pupil. But even to Athens, the shadow only of independence was left ; and if the speculations of her schools were allowed without interruption, the voice of eloquence in the Agora was hushed, and her great orator a fugitive.

Such then was the position of mitigated subjection, with the still subsisting forms of the ancient constitution left to each, of the states of Greece, when summoned to send deputies to the congress

on the Isthmus. There the Macedonian monarch explained his intentions regarding Persia, and demanded of each state its contingent of force towards the expedition. The number of the troops of all Greece was fixed at 200,000 foot, and 15,000 horse. Philip afterwards prosecuted his preparations on the largest scale, and sent forward a small force under Parmenio and Attalus, who waited for the main army in Æolis. This was in the year 337 B C ; and it had been Philip's intention forthwith to assemble his forces and set his army in motion ; but events soon happened which fatally broke short his purposes, and transferred to another agent the task of conquering Asia. The first of these was a war which broke out in Illyricum, and which, with other domestic disturbances, occupied Philip to the end of the year. In the year following, the Macedonian monarch himself fell by the hand of Pausanias, one of his body guard ; and for a moment Greece breathed more freely, and conceived the hope of becoming again independent. But this event only transferred the sceptre to a still more daring hand ; and the son of Philip, Alexander, now twenty years of age, immediately gave proof, by the speed and decision of his measures in suppressing the revolt of Thebes and Athens, that the change which had passed upon the condition of the Greek states was a permanent one, and that the hand which ruled them was fully equal to the emergence occasioned by Philip's death.

Nothing is more remarkable in the story of mankind than its dependence, under the secret direction of Providence, on the appearance, in particular conjunctures of history, of individuals endued with commanding force, whether of intellect, genius, will, or even fiery temperament and passion. The fact of such dependence, at one time for good, and at another for evil, on the influence of such characters, is apparent enough on a review of the course of human affairs ; for we have only to refer to some ten or more conspicuous names, and it could be said that, subject to the absolute higher disposal of the Supreme Ruler, and considered only as instruments for good or the contrary, if *those* had not appeared, each in his own age and conjuncture, and had not been endued with such and such characteristical temperament, there appeared *none other* to supply their place ; and the course of events, and complexion of the future, would not have deviated into such marked novelty, but for the instrumentality supplied by exactly the agents, which thus came forward on the stage of time.

This is *not* to say, that such agencies are necessarily good, or beneficent in their character, or even immediate activity; for oftenest, they are far the reverse. Nor is it meant, that, because, when evil, they are permitted, and even employed, by an overruling providence, they are therefore approved, or positively decreed. They arise, if evil, under the general law of human life; and being foreseen by Divine wisdom, are only *not prevented* from fulfilling their course, whilst they are controlled in their agency, or in its consequences, so as to advance the general intentions of the Supreme rule. If good, the appearance of such instrumentality in single human characters, must be referred to a higher and distinct origin, as an agency *called forth*, and appointed by the beneficent counsels of Heaven, to carry forward in a right direction the history of the world. But, subject to those conditions, the fact is undoubted, of the immense and decisive consequence, in critical moments of the world's history, of the appearance of such minds, whose force of character and intellect destined them to give impulse, if not law, to myriads of their fellow-beings.

In the *history of the human mind*, considered comprehensively in its general advance in knowledge, intelligence, power of abstraction, scientific discovery, inventions, and arts, perhaps the influence of single minds, though actually immense and incalculable, may have been really less indispensable; so that, unless interrupted by disastrous revolutions from barbarism, the career of science and art would have still advanced, if not by such *tidal waves*, yet by the equable activity of human minds of *general* competence and force. For instance, if Pythagoras, or Euclid, or Archimedes, or, in after ages, Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo, or, again, in modern history, if Bacon, Locke, and Newton, had not appeared, it is still conceivable, that some other minds, though at later moments, would have arisen to speculate and think, if not with their single power and effect, yet in the *same direction*; and that the science of numbers, and lines, and the investigations of the laws of mind, and of the physical universe, would not have continued till now in the rudiments of their infancy, but step by step would have held their course towards that limit, which we see they *have* attained by larger strides, from the intellectual endowments of the great names we have referred to. In the resources of the mind of man generally, provision is made for such advance, in virtue of the insatiable



curiosity planted in our common nature, combined with the common faculties bestowed on man by the benign Giver of all good. But in the *political* history of the world, in those changes which determine the condition of nations, whether for rule or subjection, for rest or revolution, the force of single minds of commanding genius appears to be far more exclusive, and indispensable, as the determining agency in giving a new direction to human affairs. To refer, for example, to Philip of Macedon, or to the still more signal instance of his son, the youth who now comes forward in the history of Greece, or, in after times, to Julius Caesar, or Constantine the Great, or Mahomet, to descend no lower in history; it is difficult to see, if these characters had not each appeared in his age, and in the very crisis in which he did, that there were any *other* minds, endowed with precisely the same commanding talents or tendencies, to *occupy their ground*, and to fulfil the part which each one acted in altering the direction and cast of the world's story.

It is true, that, if the intentions of the Supreme wisdom had still been, to permit such changes as they effected, other instrumentalities would have been forthcoming, though their existence is now unapparent, on the review of the history of the past. But the juster view would seem to be, that the revolutions they were the instruments to effect, were permitted, and if beneficent provided, in conjunction with the rise and character of each; and that thus the free agency, and more, the decisive evolution of the free agency of man, was permitted and selected to work its own aim under the overruling control of Infinite wisdom. But again, we would observe, that, regarded from our own position of knowledge and judgment, these greater agents seem critically indispensable, each to the great change which he effected.

There is, however, *another* view of the same fact, which may serve to abate our estimate of the supereminent force of such agents. They had great and exclusive influence, each in his position, in determining the next great aspect of the world's history. None other could supply their place, and, apart from the condition already named, of the intentions of Providence to the contrary, the changes which they *did* effect would have been unrealized, but for their appearance and special endowments. But it is equally true, that they could not *alone* have effected such changes, even in their human possibilities. Their position, the

circumstances of their times and nation, the preparatory conditions and tendencies of their age, were as indispensable to *them*, as *they* were to their particular positions. Philip of Macedon could have effected nothing, if he had lived fifty years earlier, before the forces of his own country had been consolidated, and the strength of southern Greece had been broken by wars and factions. Alexander himself would have pined in rude obscurity, or wasted his genius on minor wars in Illyricum, if his life had been, in the same manner, and only by a few years, antedated. Cæsar, if born, not 100 years, but 120 years before Christ, would have been precluded from the conquest of Gaul, and perhaps have perished in the ranks of Marius' army in Africa, or in the struggles of the contest with Sylla. Thus the circumstances and preparations of the age and country of each, must ever be taken into the estimate of his power and influence. His will, indispensable to give combination and impulse to the forces of other minds, is yet also, in some degree, the exponent of such forces, and the igniting spark which inflames their movement. And the very hour of his birth-time, determined in higher counsels, together with the preceding conditions of history, thus was dependent on the absolute providence of Heaven, as well as the course and consequence of the activity of each.

And, doubtless, the best and highest ground, from which to contemplate the scene of human affairs, as thus often peremptorily and abruptly shifted by its more conspicuous agents, is that which is given by the *reality of the Divine government*, pervading and controlling the progress of events, and permitting the decisive movement of some agents, while calling forth and endowing others, of more immediately benign and virtuous influence, with the high qualities which give them the lead in their own age. This fact reduces the commotions and revolutions of ages into an intelligible system, in which evil, in the commanding energy of heroes, conquerors, or tyrants, is seen to be rendered ministrant, in some remote consequences, to the production of good—of some wider opening for human welfare at large, in the ages which follow a period of conquest, than existed in the age which preceded; and further, in which there is to be seen, as regards the higher endowments of intellect in any period or country, and much more the holier manifestations of eminent piety and zeal, combined with mental greatness, the proof that

Divine Providence summons forth the great lights of humanity into the firmament, to shed their radiance on the scene of time.

Thus the heroism of a single mind, combined with the conditions and tendencies of its age, is permitted to revolutionize the world's history, and to produce a totally new scene of things; and again, in periods of deep dismay and hopelessness, in the uniformity of what is little, when no ripple moves on the surface of society, *then*, as often the event afterwards shows, the Sovereign Ruler is preparing the mission of the noblest minds to come forward to irradiate the age following. To advert to only a single period in our own national history, what age seemed more hopeless than when Mary's ruthless reign had persecuted piety and genius from the land, or extinguished it at the stake? yet in that very time the decree had gone forth, if we may so speak, to assemble on the scene the whole band of noble spirits of the Puritan Fathers; and, the infancy of Baxter, Owen, Howe, and Leighton, was begun almost in the shadow of the dark retreating cloud of persecution. Thus the Supreme Disposer sends forth, from age to age, the more gifted spirits which are to promote intelligence, piety and happiness; and while their power essentially shares of the common endowments of their kind, they are also endued with that higher force and brilliance of thought which advances the human mind forward, and sustains the progress of research, and of enlightened legislation, towards that point which shall prepare the world for the millennial kingdom of Messiah.

These reflections have been forced upon us, in the anticipation of that vast change in the condition of the world, which, at the point of time to which our review has been conducted, was about to be effected by the force mainly of a single mind, in compelling the action of all Greece on Asia. The preparatory civilization attained by Athens, and the other Greek states, was indispensable to the instrumentality now to be exerted, both in its physical force, and its intellectual results. But the whole movement, as far as human calculation may divine, and viewed apart from the Divine counsels, depended, in the last instance, on the circumstance of such a youth as Alexander was, now succeeding to the throne of Macedon, and his being endued with a decision, surpassing even that of his father, to quell anew the efforts of Greece to re-assert its freedom, and to compel its action in his great enterprise against Persia. And what purpose ever re-

sulted in greater changes, and those ultimately of beneficent character? Other conquests in Asia had been the diffusion chiefly of *force* and *political dominion*; but those of Alexander, in addition to the spread of European rule over Asia, brought with them the elements of a new life of intelligence and civilization, and fixed, in many centres and cities, the reign and cultivation of a new language, a new literature, a new philosophy, and a new order of thought and purpose. All this was the result of the peculiar character of the son of Philip, and the pupil of Aristotle.

Only a very few pages will be necessary to narrate the successive steps of his conquests, till the fall of the Persian empire, or even to his own premature death. Only three years sufficed for the conquest of Persia; four years more were employed by Alexander in his expedition to India; and in eleven years from his march from Greece, his career was ended. Yet the change which he effected in the condition of the world was stamped with permanence. The whole of Asia, it is true, was not permanently revolutionized, except in its political arrangements; but it was throughout aroused by a new force, and pervaded by a new order of policy. And the whole of Asia Minor, a great proportion of Syria, perhaps all of Asia west of the Euphrates, together with the entire kingdom of the Nile—all this extent of Asia and of Africa, was revolutionized to its very depths, socially, politically, and intellectually. Asia Minor, from the Pontus to the Orontes, all the maritime cities of ancient Phœnicæ, the kingdom of Egypt, and Lybia, down to the states of Cyrene and Barca, the more ancient Greek colonies, became from the date of the conquests of Alexander essentially Greek, in civilization, in laws, in language, in literature, and in philosophy; and thus continued down to the sixth century of the Christian era. And the whole result, under Providence, is to be dated from the characteristic endowments of a single mind, the youth who, in the year B.C. 336, assumed the sceptre of Macedon.

When intelligence reached Athens, and the other Greek states, of the death of their dreaded enemy, Philip of Macedon, every heart once more rejoiced in the sense of deliverance, and the renovated hope of independence. Demosthenes, and other patriotic leaders at Athens, immediately re-appeared at their posts, and took measures for shaking off the yoke of Macedon. The like movement took place at Thebes and Sparta, and in the

smaller states. Greece had succumbed to the forces of a conqueror, who had gradually pushed forward his conquests, at one time by aggression, at another by intrigue. But this master-mind was no more; and his successor was almost a boy. Let but Greeks be true to themselves, let but Athenians even become united, and strike the first blow for freedom, by attacking the Macedonian garrison placed over them in the Acropolis; and all Greek states will follow the example of patriotism, and break for ever the yoke of Macedon, in the moment of her weakness and consternation. Suddenly the young king dissipated all these hopes. He forced his way at the head of his troops over the heights of the Cambunian range into the plains of Thessaly, and again through the passes of Mount Oeta, and, encamping before the walls of Thebes, overwhelmed all minds by the terror of his arms. Athens again averted vengeance by submission, while Thebes re-opened her gates to the conqueror. This was in the year of Philip's death. In the following year, 335 B.C., Alexander being engaged in a war with the Illyrians, and a report of his death having been spread, another attempt was made by Demosthenes and the other Greek patriots to shake off the yoke. The intelligence proved false; but the measures of Alexander this time were more severe. Thebes was razed to the ground, with the exception of its temples, and the one dwelling, where the poet Pindar, a century before this calamity, now fallen on his native place, had resided. Athens was still spared, from the reverence owned by Alexander for her ancient glories; but her patriots a third time fled, and Demosthenes continued an exile till after the conqueror's death. The power of Macedon over Greece was now completely re-established, and Alexander resumed his preparations for the attack on Persia. Yet had but more unity and vigour been shown by the Greek states, or had the son of Philip shared less of his father's impetuous decision, the event might have been otherwise. The separate states of Greece might have stood for ages, and Asia and Egypt have remained under the dominion of the Persian dynasty.

In the spring of B.C. 334, the army of Alexander, consisting of only about 30,000 foot, and 7,000 horse, was on its march through Thrace towards the Hellespont. Arrived at Sestos, it was transported across the straits to the Asiatic shore in triremes, about 160 in number. On the Granicus, a river at no great distance, which

flows into the Propontis, was arrayed the overwhelming armament of Persia, which included many thousand Greeks, who sought to liberate their fatherland, by defeating the Macedonian conqueror in Asia. The impetuous onset of Alexander's army bore down everything before it; the Persian hosts were utterly routed, and in this single battle Asia Minor was wrested from Persia. The next stand made by Persia was in a narrow valley near the city of Issus in Cilicia, situate at the pass of Mount Amanus, called the Gates of Syria. Darius Codomannus himself commanded the best forces of his empire at this point; and again those forces were defeated and put to flight, and the king necessitated to retreat beyond the Euphrates, and to abandon Syria, and the whole west of his empire, to the conqueror. Alexander did not press his retreat, but occupied himself the remainder of this year, 333 B.C., and the year following, in completing the conquest of Syria and Egypt.

In 332 B.C., Tyre was captured, and its utter ruin, in accordance with the whole literal extent of ancient prophecy, completed. Its first siege, of five years, had been maintained, but without success, by Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria. It had afterwards sustained a siege of thirteen years, being blockaded by the army of Nebuchadnezzar, when the old city, on the mainland, was abandoned to the enemy, and a new town raised on an island, half a mile distant from the shore. This second city, apparently secure on the land side, refused to open its gates to Alexander; but after a siege of seven months, during which a mole or causeway was constructed by the besiegers from the continent to the island, it was captured, and its fortifications destroyed. On the conqueror's line of march, southward towards Egypt, lay Judea, with its capital Jerusalem, now risen, under the continued protection and favour of the Persian monarchy, into a flourishing kingdom, though still politically subject to Persia. The high priest Juddua, who was also at the head of the civil administration, determined, with the consent of the chief elders, and the people generally, to appeal to the clemency of the young Macedonian; and on his approach, at the head of his generals, went forth with all the priests, arrayed in their sacred vestments, in solemn procession to meet the conqueror. Alexander, so Josephus relates, when he beheld the high priest in his ephod and tiara, and marked the Divine name inscribed on the latter, recognised a figure which had been pre-

sented to him in a dream at Dios, in Macedonia, shortly before he quitted Greece, and immediately dismounting, fell prostrate in worship before the sacred name. This account is deemed unworthy of credence, by the best historians ; but the fact of Alexander having accepted the submission of the city, and treated the Jewish people with clemency, is undoubted ; and at this point, commenced that conjunction of Jewish history with the Greek influence in Asia, which resulted in such important consequences in relation to the Divine oracles. Had the Jewish leaders at this time counselled resistance, and subjected Jerusalem to the calamities of a siege, and the miseries of an inevitable capture, the fate of Tyre had probably been repeated in Jerusalem ; and the city being razed to the ground, the Jewish polity would have been brought to an end, and the population again driven forth from their home. Or, even if these extremities had not ensued, and Alexander had captured, but spared the city and people, the deep resentment and aversion left on the minds of the Jewish race by a futile struggle, would have prevented the next great event in their history, which was the settling of a large Jewish colony in the new capital, which Alexander soon founded in Egypt. The generosity of the conqueror in guarding the holy city from the violence of his soldiers, and above all his forbearance in not intruding on the sacred precincts of the temple, produced the fullest confidence on both sides, and rendered the relation of the conquests of Alexander to Jewish history, one of benign influence and auspicious result. To the character of this first meeting of the Grecian conqueror with the representatives of the Mosaic priesthood, and of the people at large, we are indebted, under Providence, for all the results, in the history of the revealed oracles, which followed the establishment of a Jewish settlement in Egypt.

The measures of Alexander were taken with a celerity which distanced the anticipations of all around him ; and yet, for the most part, with a sagacity which surpassed the penetration of his oldest and wisest generals. From Judea he advanced by rapid marches to Egypt, and after a brief resistance the whole ancient kingdom of the Nile was his own. In the same year, 332 B.C., in which this important conquest was made, he founded Alexandria, a new capital near the Delta of the Nile. The modern city, somewhat removed from the ancient site, still retains that command of the traffic from the east to Europe, which its well-chosen position

ensured for the capital from its origin onward. It was built on the narrow neck of land which runs parallel to the shore, and separates the lake Mareotis from the Mediterranean.

There is scarcely another example in ancient times of such singular felicity, in determining the position of a great capital, if we except, perhaps, the choice of Constantine in fixing the site of the second capital of the Roman empire. Alexandria became at once the emporium of the traffic of the Nile, and still more, of the Indies, with the states of all Europe; and even after the discovery of the passage round the Cape, it has retained its importance as the readiest channel of intercourse between the Eastern and the Western world. It became, after Alexander's death, the seat of the Greek monarchy of the Ptolemies, and the second home of Greek literature and philosophy, after the decline of Athens. In a still later age, Alexandria became the most celebrated school of Christian literature and philosophy, under Origen, Dionysius, and Ammonius. In a word, the great capital founded by Alexander, in the second year after his departure from Greece, became the centre and source of that Greek culture, which, from this time, was to tincture the speculations of the Jews, and which made it necessary to promulge in the language of Greece the mysteries of the Divine oracles, so long kept hidden from the nations in the Hebrew language.

To his new city the conqueror invited settlers from all quarters, particularly from Greece and Asia Minor. Thither removed about 100,000 of his new subjects from Judea, having a distinct quarter of the city allotted to them, and being protected by special immunities granted from the Greek monarch. Such were the immediate relations, resulting in further and most momentous consequences, established at the very commencement, between the Greek conqueror of Asia, and the descendants of the Hebrew patriarch. We must, however, turn from these contemplations, for the present, to follow the progress of the conqueror in consummating the overthrow of Persia.

In the spring of the following year, 331 B.C., after the establishment of his power in Egypt, Alexander resumed his enterprise against Darius, and marched with his forces with all speed eastward, towards the ancient far-famed capitals of the Persian and Assyrian monarchies. He crossed the Euphrates and the Tigris, to the final encounter with the vast host of warriors again collected



under Darius Codomannus, and now arrayed in the plains of Gaugamela, about 50 miles distant from Arbela. They are said to have amounted to a million soldiers, though this number is probably much exaggerated, and a great proportion must have been newly levied, and imperfectly disciplined and equipped. But, even with a vast outnumbering advantage on the part of the Persians, the question had now been fully decided, as to the superiority of the hardy valour and firm array of Europeans, when matched against even the best disciplined forces of Asia; and the battle, called that of Arbela, terminated their overthrow. Alexander was again victor in this third battle; and Darius hastened from the field, and was murdered by one of his own guard. Thus ended the dynasty founded by Cyrus: thus fell the dominion of Persia; and a young Greek prince became master of the civilized world. In three years from his quitting Greece, in three battles after he set foot in Asia, that of the Granicus, the battle of Issus, and this last, of Arbela, the whole achievement was accomplished, of the conquest, by a Greek force, of that vast monarchy of which Greece had stood in dread for centuries. Into the possession of a young Greek warrior, not yet five-and-twenty, fell, by these victories, all the ancient monarchies of the east. The kingdoms of Croesus, and of Ninus; the lands ruled by Solomon, and the kingdom of Sesostris; the kingdoms of Persia and the Medes; whatever territory, whatever people, west of the Indus, had been known to fame under ancient political combinations, were now the provinces of a single master, and of one who held also under his sway the many smaller states, but of far more illustrious name, of Greece proper, as well as those of Thrace, Macedon, and Illyricum, to the very shores of the Adriatic. By a swiftness, energy, and daring, which acknowledged no obstacle in numbers or distance when opposed to it, the Greek force headed by Alexander broke with resistless power upon Persia, and shivered the monarchy of Darius to pieces.

Was not this a wonderful change to pass on the condition of the world? Was not such an acquisition an astonishing result, given to the enterprise prepared by Philip of Macedon, and now consummated in three battles by his son? Could it be, that a new political arrangement and condition of the nations, so much vaster in extent than any previous one, and so distinct in the elements of the conquering power from all former conquests in the east,

would be permitted, without some higher design in the councils of Providence than that of even the wider spread of civilization; or was not this a change permitted for the purpose of being rendered preparatory to the coming era of the promulgation of the universal dispensation of Christianity, after the advent of Him who is the Desire of nations? Surely *this* view of Alexander's conquests, as it is one founded in the reality of subsequent consequences resulting from it, so is it the high and important one, to be made prominent in our contemplation, in surveying the revolutions of ancient times. And, in accordance with this view, we discern the distinct and prominent place given to the Greek enterprise in prophecy. About three centuries before this event, the Hebrew prophet, in Babylon, had seen the vision of the Grecian assault on the monarchy, which should succeed that of Nebuchadnezzar. Its attack on the Persian monarchy is described as that of the leopard springing on its prey, swift, agile, fierce, resistless. Such is the very picture of Greek conquest in Asia. There had been no parallel to the rapidity of the whole event. It passed over the eastern world like a dream. In three short years, and the overshadowing empire, which dated its power from Cyrus, and which was the continuation of the previous older form of dominion, all had vanished, and Asia was a province in the grasp of the Greek warrior.

The career of Alexander from this point in his conquests was not idle. Having taken possession of the great capitals of the east, of Ecbatana, Susa, and Persepolis, and having appropriated and divided their treasures and palaces, he marched his army northwards into Bactriana, and defeated the Scythian tribes north of the Jaxartes. But his aspirations were restless. He next directed the course of his army towards the Indus, which he crossed at the Cabul pass, near the modern Attock; and having defeated Porus, one of the Indian kings, became master of that northern province of India, which is now our own, the modern Punjab. He founded a town on the Hydaspes, the modern Jhelum, and advanced as far as the Hyphasis, or the Sutlej, so memorable in our own campaigns, in the final defeat of the Sikhs. The Sutlej was the limit, eastward, of the conquests of Alexander. Having received the homage of the various small kingdoms of the Punjab, he sailed down the Indus with a portion of his troops; the remainder in two divisions marching along the banks of the river.

Having reached the ocean, Nearchus was directed to proceed with the fleet towards the Persian Gulf; while Alexander with the army marched in the same direction through Gedrosia, Carmania, and Persis, and reached Susa in the spring of B.C. 325.

Ten years had now elapsed since he left Greece. Besides the activity of military movements in these years, there were measures taken at all points, calculated to render the vast conquests secure and permanent. Petty princes were deposed, and Greek officers appointed to various provinces, and Greek garrisons established in each. New cities were built, and colonized by the soldiers of the army and their families. In fact, the activity of the civil administration kept pace with that of military enterprise; so that the empire of the Greeks became absolute, and capable of endurance, after the hand which had formed it should be smitten by death. Only two years more remained before this event happened. In the year 323 B.C., after a short illness, the Greek conqueror of the world died, in the midst of the numerous political plans and undertakings, which he was devising or prosecuting for the further amalgamation of the Greeks with the Persian race, and the more perfect consolidation, by this means, of Europe and Asia in one empire. He had reigned, in all, over Greece twelve years, over Persia eight years, and had reached the age of thirty-two. He named no successor. A son was born of his queen Roxana, daughter of Oxyartes, a short time after his death. This child was acknowledged as partner of the throne by one of the generals who first assumed the sceptre in the east; but having been taken to Macedonia by his mother, his claims were disallowed by Cassander, and both he and his mother were put to death, when young Alexander was but eleven years old.

We have pursued the course of Alexander's conquests, though only in a general and rapid form of reference, to their termination in his early death. In describing them, we have not aimed to scrutinize their motives, or to pronounce upon effects, except in their wider and more remote political consequences. Neither have we commented on the character of the conqueror, on the stricter estimate to which all human actions are amenable. The wars of Alexander, like all other wars of conquest, were open wrongs, and inflicted, in their immediate effect, cruel misery and desolation on the nations he subdued; however true it may have been, that they resulted in spreading through Asia the seeds of a

higher civilization, and, perhaps remotely, thus contributed to meliorate the condition of those nations. Nor were such evils unmerited, both on account of the Persian attacks on Greece, and in respect of the arrogance and tyranny long exerted by Persia over the other nations of the east. Viewed in its most general aspect, the irruption of the Greek force, and its resistless course over Asia, was a tempest which cleared the moral atmosphere of central Asia, and aroused the mind of that primeval centre of human population in a manner never experienced before. Of the results of Greek conquest in Egypt we have already spoken, and shall have to offer some additional remarks afterwards. If, further, we advert to the character of the conqueror, while condemning the spirit of ambition, which in him was so absorbing and gigantic, as the spring of all injustice and wrong, it is impossible to withhold admiration of the brilliant force of character displayed in his career, and the wonderful penetration and sagacity which marked all his great achievements. But these qualities were clouded with miserable defects and vices. A temper, naturally generous and kind, became, in Alexander, wayward, fierce, and uncontrollable; and the intelligent pupil and enthusiastic friend of Aristotle yielded himself to intemperance, till his passions were fired into madness, and the conqueror of Asia could give orders to murder his best and truest friends.

Thus, by the daring ambition, energy, and genius of one youthful Greek warrior, aided by the preparatory civilization, resources, and combined force of the Greek states, the second great empire of the world was broken, and a third empire, more vast in extent, and embracing the wealthiest portions of Europe and Asia, or rather the whole civilized world at that period, was set up in its place, in accordance with the predictions of the sacred oracles. This was an empire, too, not only so much vaster in extent than the preceding, but different in its character, being informed by a higher spirit of intelligence, and comprehending in its influence and effects the diffusion of European speculation and art throughout the comparatively dense darkness of Asiatic thought. That it was attended with such diffusion of Greek literature and art to its furthest limit eastward, though in only an imperfect degree, we know; since Greek colonies were planted in Bactriana, and elsewhere nearer the Indus; Greek governments established in the great capitals of the east, in Persepolis, Ecbatana, Susa, Babylon,

and other places; and a Greek population, not only military, but of other classes, was attracted to these cities, from Greece and Asia Minor, by the rich prizes of wealth, territory, and honours, held out to them by the conqueror. And this pervasion, if we may speak so, of the Greek element, in the political and social state of central Asia, was greatly more enduring, as well as more widely spread in extent, than is commonly imagined. It is only of late, that the researches of travellers in the east, in the discovery of various traces of Greek colonization, have made this fact fully evident; otherwise, the common idea of Alexander's conquests had been that of a momentary wave of military dominance passing over Asia, but leaving no trace of its passage any more than the fabled conquests of Bacchus or Sesostriis. But the fact was not so. Even India in its lower provinces, is supposed, on just evidence, to have inherited speculations and arts, transmitted from the Greek occupation of Cabul, and the Punjab.

Not long ago, literary inquirers among our countrymen in the east, having mastered the mysteries of Sanscrit lore, were startled by finding that the Brahmins possessed an acquaintance with the syllogistic system of reasoning, of which Aristotle, the famous preceptor of Alexander, had been presumed the chief inventor. The conclusion was, that either Aristotle had obtained a knowledge of this art of formal reason, through some of his friends among Alexander's officers, and had issued it in Europe, in his teachings at Athens, or in subsequent writings, as his own discovery; or, that the speculations of the Greek philosopher had been communicated by the Greeks in Asia, many of them probably former hearers of Aristotle, to the learned class in Persia, in Cabul, and in the Punjab, and through these had passed to the Brahmins of Hindostan. Either this latter supposition must be presumed correct, or Aristotle must be deemed chargeable with the meanest plagiarism and imposture, which none will probably for a moment assent to. There is indeed a third supposition, also in the highest degree improbable, which is, that in the same remote age, and in countries so distant, the same discovery should have been made, at once by Aristotle, and by learned Brahmins. These last, it is true, pretended that it was of remote Indian origin, and had been transmitted to the present times in the channel of their priesthood. But the explanation, in which all competent judges acquiesce, is the very obvious one, that it became

known in Bactriana and India by means of Greek colonists and Greek schools, and thence was transferred by the Brahmins, and classed with the profound mysteries of Sanscrit knowledge. Thus viewed, the fact at least exhibits a singular and significant fragmentary memorial of the Greek empire in Asia, and of that spread of Greek intelligence and art, as accompanying the Macedonian conquests, to which we have referred. Nor can it be doubted, if so peculiar a remnant of Greek philosophy as the one named could thus have survived for so many ages, that innumerable other modes of thought, and in fact much of Greek literature and philosophy, were in the same manner diffused in many of the great eastern provinces.

So far with respect to the diffusion of Greek civilization in the east. We must add one or two words on its prolonged endurance, before we follow the course of events, after that partition of the Macedonian empire which took place on the death of Alexander. It is not generally adverted to, even by many readers of Greek history, that the Greek monarchy in Asia continued, in its essential form of Greek dominance, for ages after the conqueror's death. This part of the division of the empire occupied less the attention of Greek historians, and obtained not the prominence which was naturally given to those divisions which lay nearer Europe, the kingdoms of Antioch, Pergamus, and Egypt, and much more that which was situate in Europe itself, the kingdom of Macedon. We shall presently advert to each of these kingdoms, into which the empire was broken; but we wish to impress the fact here, that the eastern portion of the kingdom of Babylon, inherited by the Seleucidæ, continued in its unity and strength as a Greek monarchy in central Asia, for nearly a century from the death of Alexander; till it was overthrown by a revolt of the Parthians, who succeeded in founding a powerful kingdom, stretching from the Euphrates to the Indus, which lasted 476 years, to A.D. 226, when the course of events again restored the dominance in Asia to Persia, under Artaxerxes, the son of Sassan. What we are chiefly concerned to notice at present, is the duration of the Greek monarchy after Alexander's death, and the continued efforts of Seleucus and his successors to extend Greek civilization throughout that part of Asia. Viewed in this light, the conquest of Alexander assumes a new interest; and it can be affirmed, that it effected no inconsiderable change on the whole character of

central Asia, by the diffusion of intelligence and art. The population never sank afterwards to the level of that deep debasement, in which the former monarchies, whose control was that of physical force, left them. The rule of Persia, it is admitted, was a great advance, in this respect, on that of Babylon and Nineveh; inasmuch as the noble-minded Cyrus introduced much of clemency and of enlightened legislation into his administration. But his monarchy was still essentially a despotism, which kept the mass of the nations in servitude, and employed the flower of the population chiefly in the pursuits of war. The conquests of Alexander, and the monarchy inherited by one of his generals, spread a new element of civilization through the vast centre of Asia. Colonies were established, as we have mentioned; in the chief cities, schools were founded; the pursuits of art were encouraged; and every method was employed to allure to them the sons of Persian nobles, so as to blend their families as much as possible with those of their European masters.

Such in character, in extent, and in duration, was the effect of the Macedonian conquest on the civilization of the east. Its form was chiefly that of a freer intelligence, an awakened activity of thought, and a communication of the arts and literature of Greece. It laboured of course under the inherent defect attaching to the highest Greek civilization itself. It was intelligence darkened by idolatry. It contained no moral element of melioration, except in the remote and slight degree, in which an increased mental activity might ultimately dispose to juster views of morals, and particularly, as it might tend to prepare populations for the more intelligent reception of the dispensations of heavenly truth, which were at last to open upon the ancient world. But even with the abatements we have allowed, it cannot, we think, be reasonably doubted, that the conquests of Greece conferred, in this sense, a lasting benefit on central Asia, and were permitted by Providence with a view to this result, to serve as a preparatory awakening of intellect, till the dawn of a better illumination.

Having made these observations, with respect to a portion of Greek history in the east which has been less dwelt upon by historians, and is probably less familiar to the general reader, we proceed to carry forward the narrative, or summary of events in the Greek empire, after the death of Alexander. It is well known that its unity was broken immediately, and that, after some con-

tests among the generals of Alexander, the result was the formation of four powerful monarchies; that of Syria and Babylon, in central Asia; that of Egypt and Palestine; the kingdom of Pergamus, in Asia Minor; and the kingdom of Macedon, including the other chief European dominions of Alexander.

The mighty conqueror of the world died, as we have stated, at Babylon, after a short illness, in the year B.C. 323. It was a point long contested, where his remains were to be deposited; some of his officers contending for Babylon, others that his body should be conveyed to the tomb of his fathers at Pella, the capital of Macedon. Finally the request of Ptolemy Lagus prevailed, in favour of the great city which Alexander had founded in Egypt; and the funeral procession, which slowly advanced from the east, was met in Syria by Ptolemy at the head of his whole army, and the corpse conveyed to Egypt. It was deposited at first in the city of Memphis, but afterwards interred in a magnificent tomb in Alexandria, where Ptolemy soon after built a gorgeous temple to the memory of his master, in which the honours, usually rendered to heroes and demigods by pagan antiquity, were celebrated in reverence of the conqueror's name. But, excepting these vain and impious, though, on Ptolemy's part, not insincere marks of affection and gratitude, little else of regard was paid to his memory. The mighty effects of his heroic achievements remained, in the vast Greek empire of the east, which was soon divided among his generals; and the influence and results of his conquests in Asia were perpetuated, as we have already insisted, in remoter consequences for ages in the condition of Asia. But it is striking to notice, how utterly the influence and memory of the hero seem to have abruptly ceased with his death; not of course as an example of grand achievement in history, but in respect of any marks of cherished affection amongst his generals or armies, or any grateful interest in the infant born after his decease. As we have already mentioned, both the widow of Alexander, and her son when at the age of eleven, after experiencing many vicissitudes, were cruelly put to death in Macedon by Cassander. No personal influence of the conqueror survived his burial, and he would seem to have been scarcely remembered when once the tomb had closed upon his remains.

But his mighty conquests remained. Persia, on the death of her European lord, did not spring up to assert her freedom; but



remained, with all the provinces of the east, humbled and passive; and all the contests that ensued, were, not the struggles of native populations for their ancient independence, but the contentions of Greek generals for the partition of the empire. Numerous arrangements were at first proposed, and in these earlier ones, the claims of Roxana and her infant were to some extent regarded. But wars ensued between the new sovereigns of Babylon, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Greece; until at last, the battle of Ipsus in Phrygia, B.C. 301, some twenty years after the conqueror's death, terminated the contest by the defeat of Antigonus, who had aspired to the sovereignty of all Asia; and led to that final partition of the Macedonian empire into four monarchies, which fulfilled the predictions of the prophet Daniel. This final division gave Palestine and Egypt to Ptolemy Lagus, Syria and Babylon, with the eastern provinces, to Seleucus; Thrace, Bithynia, and other provinces of Asia Minor to Lysimachus; Macedon and Greece to Cassander. Such was the final fourfold distribution of the Macedonian empire, which subsisted with slight exceptions to the period, when the arms of Rome spread a new dominion over Greece and Asia, and over the rest of the civilized world.

It is not necessary, for any purpose we have in view in these pages, to follow the fortunes of these kingdoms, separately, down to the time of their fall, and their absorption in the Roman empire. Some references will occur respecting each in the review of Roman conquest. We need here only mention, that the period of their subsistence, as independent states, may be generally computed at about 250 years from the battle of Ipsus, which determined their final arrangement. That battle, in which Antigonus was defeated, took place B.C. 301; and before the year 50 B.C., each of the four monarchies had become part of the Roman empire. During these two and a half centuries, their general history may be described as one of incessant contests and wars, with only brief interruption, in which Macedon was involved in collision with the kingdom of Bithynia, and the monarchs of Syria with the kings of Egypt, till the growth and advance of a mightier power from the west, quelled their contests in one common prostration to a new master.

We have said that we purposely decline pursuing the story of these separate kingdoms of the Macedonian empire. An excep-

tion however is to be made with respect to Egypt, or the kingdom of the Ptolemies, inasmuch as this Greek monarchy, founded on the Nile by Alexander, became the most stable, flourishing, and splendid of all the four kingdoms named; and further, because in this part of Alexander's conquests, those peculiar results were to be realized, which fulfilled so important a service in the history of revealed truth, and to which we have already more than once alluded. The kingdom of the Ptolemies comprehended Judea and other parts of Syria under its rule; and the condition of the race of Abraham was determined, under Providence, by the character and policy of the monarchs of Egypt. Further, in Alexandria flourished that increasing colony of the Jewish race, which became from this time familiar with the Greek language, and indeed soon spoke no other, and for whom, therefore, the version of their Scriptures into Greek became necessary, which was accomplished under Ptolemy's patronage, by seventy of their most learned scribes. Hence it is in Egypt chiefly, that we discern that *convergence* of the purposes of Providence, in permitting the spread of the Macedonian conquests, which told more immediately on the preparations for the promulgation of Divine truth. Though the spread of the Greek language and literature generally, in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor, and even in the great capitals of the east, beyond the Euphrates, prepared widely the medium of a common speech, at least amongst the educated in these lands, for the diffusion of the sacred oracles; in Egypt, the ancient oracles were *themselves* translated into *this medium*, 178 years before the Christian era; and thus a foundation was laid for the freer subsequent diffusion of a new heavenly message. To this grand era, it will have been seen, the tide of human affairs was now rapidly advancing.

Every great revolution, in preceding history, will be found to have been an advance in the same direction, in the levelling of nations into wider communities, and opening a freer communication throughout the extent of the civilized world. Even the ruthless conquests of Assyria and Babylon prepared for this free intercourse and intelligence among the nations of the east. The monarchy founded by Cyrus, at the head of the Persian race, descendants of Elam, inaugurated, in the spread of a new dominion, the introduction of milder government and law, and the diffusion of a more enlightened order of belief in religion; for

the Persians, at least after the times of Zoroaster, acknowledged the Supreme First Cause, with scarcely the immixture in their worship of any symbols of the Divinity, except the element of fire. The Greek conquest diffused over the east a more quickening intelligence, by the spread of its philosophy, literature, and arts; and though allied to a mythology more degrading than the forms of Persian belief, yet the awakening effect exerted on the mind was of incalculable value, and would aid in the general preparation of humanity for the ultimate apprehension of truth, and the detection of the falsehood of superstition. But the chief results were, the free intercourse of nations from Macedon to the Indus, the spread of the Greek language as the common medium of intelligence, and, more emphatically, the embodying, in that universal language of education after the Macedonian conquests, of that ancient revelation, which, till the age of the Ptolemies, had remained concealed from the rest of the world, in the custody of the Hebrew race. This last event makes it necessary to concentrate our view, for a while, on the dynasty of the Ptolemies, on the Nile, before we pass to the contemplation of the last great revolution in ancient times, which immediately preceded, and more effectually prepared for the era of Christianity. We have already, it is true, given some account of this dynasty in tracing the revolutions of Egypt, which it was necessary to bring down to the time of the Roman empire, in order to exhibit its history in something of entire outline. Our remarks at present will be directed more especially to the relations of this Greek kingdom of the Nile to the Jewish race, and Jewish literature, together with the promulgation of the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

To Ptolemy Lagus, as has been stated, fell the kingdom of Egypt, including Lybia, together with Cœle Syria, from the Libanus southward to the river of Egypt. Thus Palestine, where, after the restoration, the second kingdom of the Jews had flourished under the uninterrupted protection of Persia, fell to the possession of the Egyptian monarch. It will be remembered, how the appeal of the Jewish high priest and ruler to the humanity of the conqueror, and the quiet submission of the people to his irresistible power, conciliated the favour of Alexander, and thus preserved their polity from extinction, or even disturbance, in the full sweep of conquests which shattered other kingdoms and thrones of Asia to fragments. The terrific pha-

lanxes which had humbled Persia, and ruined Tyre, and which were now advancing to overthrow the last Asiatic dynasty in Egypt, passed by Jerusalem with reverence; and their leader not only forbade all violation of the rights and even repose of the inhabitants, but, by whatever influence moved, observed the most profound regard towards the priesthood, the temple, and the worship of the true God at Jerusalem, and adopted the whole nation into the same special patronage, which Cyrus and his successors had granted to it for the two centuries preceding. Without receiving literally the accounts given by Josephus of the meeting of Alexander and Juddua, it is impossible not to consider the fact of its complete exemption of Judea, in this crisis, from the calamities which fell upon other states, and which might have swept its second Hebrew kingdom from history, without acknowledging the overruling purposes of God, in staying the wrath of the mighty, and reserving the polity of the Abrahamic race to the times of Messiah's reign. The sceptre was *not* taken from Judah, even when all other sceptres changed hands in the eastern world.

As the house of Pindar alone was spared, when the rest of Thebes was levelled with the ground; as the fortifications and noble edifices of Athens, and even the forms of her constitution, were respected by the conqueror, for the sake of the philosophy and genius of her schools and poets, when so many cities of Greece were either destroyed or subjected to Macedonian oppression; so, in the conquest of Asia, the Jewish state and the Jewish capital were left untouched, were treated by the victorious lord of the world even with reverence, and survived amid the fall and revolutions of Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, for some centuries longer, till the full purposes of a higher dispensation should be accomplished. Nor is it possible for even the mere student of history not to perceive, in this fact, the evidence of that secret providential rule, which disposes all things in accordance with the Divine plan. The continuance, in fact, of the Jewish state, amid the desolations of the Macedonian conquests, and, perhaps, still more, amid the subsequent conflicts of Syria and Egypt, is an instance of preservation similar, though not in duration parallel, to the miraculous preservation of the Jewish race as a distinct people, though wanderers in all lands, down to the very times in which we live.

To this preservation, in its further continuance, the allotment

of Palestine to the Ptolemies of Egypt, mainly contributed. The Ptolemies were characteristically tolerant, and adopted in the fullest sense the policy of Cyrus, of Darius Hystaspes, and of Alexander, in their treatment of the Jewish state. They became also enthusiastic patrons of Greek literature, and founded schools of philosophy and art in Alexandria, and other cities of Egypt, which soon rivalled those of Athens, now in the period of her decline. They cultivated, far more than the Asiatic sovereigns who inherited portions of Alexander's empire, a close intercourse and often alliances with the states of Greece, and allured to Alexandria, from Greece and the Greek cities of Asia Minor, many of those eminent scholars and philosophers who had now less freedom, or incentive, for their speculations, in the lands which were the birth-place of philosophy and art. They founded a library in Alexandria, which contained the treasures of all Greek authorship, from Homer downwards, and which was enriched at last, at the express request of Ptolemy Philadelphus, with a version of those oracles that dated, in their commencing portions, from the farremote times of the earlier Pharaohs, and had been composed, twelve or more centuries before, on the banks of the Nile, by the great Jewish leader—oracles that contained the communications, rendered in human speech, of unerring and mysterious truth, given from the unseen throne of the Eternal, for the enlightening and recovery of fallen and benighted humanity. Such was the direction which the dynasty of the Ptolemies gave to the cultivation of philosophy and art in Egypt; such the general character of their policy in its liberality and tolerance; and such the influence exerted by it on the fortunes of the Jewish state, and on the interpretation, and, by this means, the safer preservation, and earlier spread, of the ancient oracles of God.

Had Providence permitted the allotment of all Palestine to the monarchs of Antioch, whose character and policy were so totally different, the result, humanly speaking, would have been far otherwise. The boundaries of the Syrian kingdom, southward, rested on Mount Libanus, and constant attempts were made by the Seleucidæ, to acquire possession of the small Jewish state which lay so near them. Had that sovereignty over Judea been achieved, the ruthless and impious attempts of Antiochus Epiphanes to abolish the institutions and religion of the Israelites, could scarcely have failed of success. Nor would the

heroic resistance of Matthias and his brave sons the Maccabees have availed, when already every city and outpost of the kingdom would have been garrisoned by the troops of their Syrian master. The original destination of Judea to the kingdom of Ptolemy Lagus, and its retention by his successors amid many vicissitudes and contests, averted this else inevitable peril, of the loss of national independence and unity, and even of religious freedom, if not faith, from the second kingdom of the house of David in Palestine. For, under the Ptolemies, as we have intimated, the Jewish state shared a kindly protectorate, rather than sustained any diminution of freedom. With one exception, of a rash attempt upon Jerusalem by the first of the Ptolemies, which was never repeated, the national repose was never by Egypt interrupted. There was a tribute imposed, which, not a foreign officer, but a Jewish chief administrator collected; and this, never oppressive in amount, was the chief burden incurred in return for the protection of Egypt, which guarded Judea from the alternative of falling under the cruel dominion of Antioch.

Having alluded so often to the Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures, effected by the seventy Jewish translators, for the benefit of the Jewish colony at Alexandria, and in compliance with the demand of Ptolemy Philadelphus, it is necessary to state more fully, at this point, the nature of that precise service to revelation, which was thus rendered by the Septuagint version. And, in the first place, the attention of the reader is called to the date of this translation, which was completed at least about 178 B.C., if not earlier. This fact, of the Divine oracles being rendered into the language of Greece, nearly two centuries before Christ, is of incalculable moment, as evincing the existence of the canonical Scriptures at that date, and furnishing, in their historical evidence, a fixed and unquestioned position, whence their history and proof can be traced upward, to the restoration, or to Ezra's time, about B.C. 500, when, with the exception of Malachi, the canon of ancient inspiration was completed. This Greek version attests the possession, belief, and solemn use of these oracles by the Jewish nation in the period referred to, as the inspired writings transmitted down from their fathers, from a date coeval with the beginning of their national history. It is not necessary, for our present purpose, to detail the process of the ascending proof in the anterior period. The exposition of this lies beyond the province of this historical

review. Let it suffice, for our present object, to fix attention on the position, thus incontrovertibly made good by the publication of the Septuagint. All from this point downwards, in evidence of the existence, the contents, the publicity of the Divine oracles, becomes general history, and that independent even of Jewish testimony.

In the next place, it should be remarked, that the fact of this version guarded the sacred oracles from all attempts in any later age to interfere, had the Jews been so disposed, with the text of the Scriptures. No such disposition can be fairly imputed to the Jewish scribes at any period; but the temptation to such attempt might seem offered in a later age, when it became apparent, that the peculiar and seemingly inconsistent intimations of prophecy regarding the Messiah, as a personage, at once glorious and mean, longed for and yet rejected, a King of Zion and yet crucified and hated, came to be realized, with irresistible evidence, in the character and history of Jesus of Nazareth. Had the wish been felt to tamper with these prophecies, or any other part of Scriptures, the achievement might have been quite feasible, had there been only their own Hebrew, or Chaldee version extant, and that version in their own hands; but it became impossible, from the moment that its contents were incorporated in a Greek version, and copies of it multiplied and dispersed among Jews, at least very soon, as well as a copy of the whole deposited in the public library of Alexandria. And this impossibility was realized nearly two centuries before our Lord's appearance in Judea. There were, it is true, other conditions of protection to even the Hebrew oracles, in the multiplied copies of them in use in the synagogues after the captivity, as well as before, and in the habitual public reading of the word of God throughout the land every sabbath day. But at least the transfer of the whole into a new version, the first ever made since the word of God came to man, fixed the security of the sacred text beyond all further peril or question. More than this; the Septuagint translation now effected at Alexandria, ensured the integrity of the sacred text, not only against the chance of wilful corruption, but against the danger of accumulated minute errors, incurred in the process of transcription. We have, in the Septuagint, the readings of the Hebrew manuscript, as it then lay before the eyes of the translators. Not that some minute deviations in letters or figures may not have crept into the translation. But it is at least

certain, that it could have met with no general acceptance, if it had not appeared to the Jews of Alexandria, who had not yet forgotten their native language, scrupulously faithful, on the whole; and had not received the solemn attestation of their countrymen at home, particularly the high priest and his colleagues at Jerusalem, as well as the rulers of synagogues throughout Palestine.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that this general fidelity of the Greek version is fully borne out by comparison with the Hebrew Scriptures themselves, which were transmitted to after ages in the channel of Jewish possession. What a striking monument does this fact exhibit, of the care of Providence in furnishing the attestation, to remotest times and foreign nations, of the revelations given to Israel, in their perfect and incorrupt form, and that by the intervention of the Greek conquest of the east! It may be mentioned further, that the Greek version of Alexandria furnishes, as against unbelievers, the most irrefragable defence of the ancient Scriptures, and of the evidence resulting from ancient prophecy. Of the predictions of revelation, those which point to the character of the Messiah are infinitely the most important; but next after these come the peculiar prophecies which unfold the succession of the world's empires, and even cast a light on the furthest ages of time. Now it is the obvious resource of infidelity to question the *existence* of such prophecies, as long anterior to the supposed events which fulfil them; and the attempt has been sometimes made, to deny the ancientness of such prophecies as those of Isaiah and Daniel. But here again the Greek version opposes an immovable obstacle to such attempt. It exhibits the existence of the Scriptures, as now read, in the age of the Ptolemies, two centuries before Christ; and, by inference from their acceptance and publicity then, it points to their existence in the remoter age, from which they had been handed down as the Divine oracles, read, believed, and revered, by a whole nation, and preserved, even at the cost of persecution and death, through every age, from the time of their promulgation.

We must, however, point out to the reader's notice *other*, more general, but important results, consequent on the early translation of the Old Testament into Greek. One of these was the gradual *promulgation* of these Scriptures amongst the learned of other nations. The Scriptures became now accessible to the Greeks of Alexandria, and though perhaps not looked into or read by many



at first, still the knowledge of them slowly spread; and especially did the existence of the Scriptures in this form afford a medium of instruction for the proselytes of other nations, who, from this time downward, gradually were added to the Jewish church as believers in the oracles of God. The number of these was not inconsiderable, as may be gathered from the fact, in a later period, of so many proselytes, or at least, attendants on Jewish synagogues, appearing amongst the Romans. But the instances of such change of faith, in Roman or Greek officers, were also frequent, in the period immediately before the coming of our Lord. The references to Cornelius and other Roman officers mentioned in the New Testament, are evidence of this fact. And, if the inquiry be, by what means did these sincere believers gain their knowledge of the revelation of the true God, the answer is, By the medium of the Greek version of Alexandria. The Hebrew would probably have presented an invincible barrier to proselytism.

Another great result, consequent on the translation of the Seventy, is to be traced in the character given by this version to the writings of the New Testament. For we have now to state, that the Septuagint version, prepared for the Alexandrian Jewish colony, gradually stole into common use among Jews in every country, to which the spirit of enterprise, after the period of Greek conquest had opened the intercourse of nations, tempted Jewish families to migrate. Hence, to such families, in the chief Greek towns of Asia Minor, in Tarsus, Ephesus, Smyrna, Troas, or Antioch, Lystra, Derbe, as well as at Alexandria, Memphis, Cyrene, and Barca, the Greek version superseded the Hebrew, in common use; and Jewish youth, of whom Saul of Tarsus, Barnabas of Cyprus, Timothy of Derbe, Lucius of Cyrene, may be cited as examples, although educated in the Hebrew language, and familiar with the rabbinical literature of the country of their fathers, were still more familiar with the idiom of the language they spoke, and used more commonly the Septuagint version of the sacred oracles. Nay, we may add, that about the commencing period of the Christian era, the Greek version was even much used, at least among educated Jews, in Judea itself; and, if not read in the provincial synagogues, was in the hands of many in the chief towns on, or near the coast; in Tyre, Ptolemais, Cosarea,

Joppa, Lydda, Antipatris; in short, wherever commerce, the line of traffic, or the position of Roman garrisons, necessitated the use of the Greek language. With the Scriptures of the Septuagint, not only Paul, Luke, and Mark, but probably even natives of Galilee, Peter, John, and James, future penmen of the new dispensation soon to be unfolded, were as familiar, perhaps the former more familiar, than with the ancient dialect of their fatherland. Nor is it improbable, that our Lord himself, in the meditations and reading which engaged his youth, had scanned the version of Alexandria, and compared it with the original scroll, in a more ancient speech, in which had been embodied and transmitted the inspired utterances of the law, the psalms, and the prophets. Hence the interest attaching, historically, to this version of the Seventy, gradually becomes enhanced, in its descent and diffusion down to the very times of Messiah, and in the cognizance of its forms of statement, which can be ascribed with *certainly* to the chief of the New Testament writers, and with high probability to them all, and even to Him, who, in comparative seclusion at Nazareth, was preparing for the period of his manifestation to Israel.

Hence a further, and still more important, if not more interesting consequence, in connection with the Septuagint Scriptures remains to be stated; and that is, that its forms of expression and peculiar idioms were destined to exert a marked influence on the composition of the succeeding and last revelation given from Heaven to man. The whole of the New Testament was written by the inspired penmen in Greek; the greater part exclusively, and the whole originally. For if the tradition be admitted, that the Gospel of Matthew was composed in Hebrew, it would appear equally certain, that it was also written by the same inspired penman in Greek; and thus *the whole of the Divine compositions*, in which the story of the Saviour's life, teachings, death, and resurrection is unfolded, as well as the first annals of his church are given, and the epistolary writings which contain the full exposition of the doctrine of the cross, are embodied in Greek, and that Greek, for the most part, the Greek of the Alexandrian version. When, however, we speak of the Greek of the New Testament, as in any respect peculiar in forms and idioms, as compared with the Greek of classic authors, no more is intended than that it is tinged by the inevitable effect of forms of expression which pervade the

Septuagint, in consequence of its being a translation of the Hebrew, effected by Hebrews. The Greek version is one which closely and anxiously follows the original, phrase by phrase, as far as the idioms of the two languages permitted, and even perhaps in a degree exceeding the conformity of phrase, which native Greeks, had they translated the Old Testament, would have given to their version. It is not necessary, however, to assume any difference, beyond this subtle result, consequent upon the close fidelity of the work, between the Greek of the Seventy, and the Greek of Greek writers of the same age. But some difference there is, and it is a pervading difference, rendering the vast mass of the ancient Scriptures, in a degree, a different reading, so to speak, however impalpably so, often, from the same amount of Greek, in the compositions of Herodotus, Thucydides, or Xenophon. But whereinsoever this difference may exist, or however to be defined, in the Septuagint version, this version being that with which, as we have seen, the evangelists and apostles were intimately familiar from constant use, its characteristic manner and modes of expression affected their own command of Greek phraseology, and inevitably stole into their own compositions, when the high vocation of a heavenly power summoned them to the task of recording its last communications. This was a natural result, acting on their knowledge and associations in the language which they adopted as the medium of promulgating Divine truth to the world; and it no way infers the imperfection of that medium, but only asserts something of a Hebraistic peculiarity in its character. In fact, we may say that, independently of the presence of a heavenly influence, which furnished or modified every conception, and regarding the New Testament writings as the productions of minds sincerely bent on uttering the truth that was in them, in the simplest, directest, plainest manner, the forms of expression they employed, though not always those of classic authors, were, for their object, more perfect than any other; and therefore, the slight anomalies, classically, of the New Testament Scriptures, constitute the conditions and elements of *their higher and more beautiful adaptation to their object*, of representing, without art or care for classic niceties, the very meanings of the Spirit of God. But we again would caution against the exaggeration of such difference. It has sometimes been imagined where it does not exist, through the illusion of

mistaking the turn of the thought and sentiment, which demanded peculiarity and change, as a caprice, or anomaly of mere diction.

To go back, however, to the source of this peculiar cast of the New Testament writings; it is to be derived from the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, which, again, was the remote, but absolutely direct result of the enterprise of Alexander of Macedon, and his conquests in rearing the third monarchy of the world; and, beyond this, of the rise, still more remote, of the literature and philosophy of Athens. For to this earlier source we must trace back, in the last remove, the fact that our New Testament Scriptures are given in Greek, which had become the language of philosophy, literature and education, ages even before it became the speech diffused by Macedonian conquest.

Our exposition has carried us far, and by many degrees beyond our intention. But the subject is a highly important one, and meriting to be fairly laid before the reader. It is so, not only as offering an investigation of the character of our Greek Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and of the source of their alleged peculiarity, but also as exhibiting the greatest of the results of the conquests of Alexander. One important result was the preservation of the Jewish polity and Jewish people to the times of Messiah; but another, not less important one, was the promulgation and conservation of the Jewish Scriptures, in their form and evidence, and the consequent preparation laid for the composition of the documents of the Christian faith. How distant seems this last result from the celebrity of the Greek schools, which gave diffusion and celebrity to the Greek language; and yet how sure, simple, and perfect, the deduction to the hour and event, when St. Paul, at Ephesus or Corinth, dictated his Epistles in Greek, or St. John in old age penned the last of the Gospels in Asia Minor!

The reader has now before him an outline, however imperfectly executed, of the train of events which led to the establishment of the third great empire of ancient times, of the character of its policy and influence, and of the consequences of its conquests, both in the general extension of civilization in Asia and the wider amalgamation of nations, and particularly in their bearings on the history and evidences of revelation, and the preparation of the ages coming for the promulgation of Christianity. And

no one, we think, will affirm that such effects were not real, in the train of Greek conquests, or that their amount and value have been exaggerated in the representation we have given of them. We have endeavoured to exhibit each element, if it may be so called, in the enumeration, in the soberest form of statement, and have rather wished to understate the import of any fact, than to exaggerate it; convinced that by this cautious process alone, any solid result in inference, or any permanent effect in impression, can be attained in such historical review as we have been engaged in. It were easy to multiply analogous instances of political, or other result, and to set forth the whole in stronger colours; but if the amount of whatever result, in the limited degree in which it has been stated, be but admitted, it will be acknowledged, that the basis has been laid for the higher inference, regarding the marvellous working of Providence in the great revolutions effected by Greece, which it was our anxious wish to evolve, and render as palpable as we could.

Let, then, the believer in revelation cast his thoughts back, for a moment, from the era of the coming of Christ, or of the fuller promulgation of Christianity, to that state of things in Asia or Europe, which existed during the height and security of the Persian dominion; and, admitting that there had been progress attained by the substitution of the Persian for the Assyrian monarchy, let him ask, if no *further* changes and movements were needed, as preparations for the times of Christianity. Let him further try, independently of reference to history, to state to himself *what* changes, at that point of time, say, in the reign of Xerxes, 470 B.C., or Artaxerxes, about 460 B.C., would have seemed to be wished for, in order to bring the condition of nations, politically, and in general intelligence, somewhat nearer to the limit of preparation for the dispensation of a faith which was to traverse the whole world. This last being assumed as the *ultimate* result, what revolutions in Asia, or in Europe, could seem best fitted as steps of advance towards it? And we are much mistaken, if he would not recount some, if not all, of the *very conditions*, which were attained by the conquests of the Macedonian kingdom. Would it not have seemed an event much to be wished for, to a thoughtful observer of the state of the world in the fifth century before Christ, that the breath of a freer intelligence and feeling should be diffused over Asia,

and that human nations should be aroused intellectually to philosophic inquiry, even if at first with feeble result as to the attainment of truth? Would it not have seemed well to break up a despotism of pure force, and of Asiatic character, even though followed by governments still often severe, yet generally more enlightened? Above all, with a reference to the time of the promulgation of one faith for the nations, and a faith to spring out of the centre of Judaism, would it not seem indispensable, that some one noble language should be diffused, as the common medium of thought, through the chief cities of Asia and Egypt, that the Jewish polity should be continued, that the Jewish Scriptures should be in a wider manner unfolded, and that the Scriptures of a new revelation, when the time for it might arrive, should be given in a language known to all the nations? Such might, we say, have seemed the benevolent and devout wish of a believer in prophecy in the period named. But how could he, at that point of history, have seen his way to the accomplishment of any of these results? What power existed, within the horizon of observation, that could aspire to overthrow Persia, and substitute a new dominion in its place from the Bosphorus to the Indus? Macedon then was a barbarous small state on the north of Greece, which not only could create no apprehension for Persia, but lay even too obscure for notice in Greece. The Greek states had risen to power and wealth, but they were insignificant compared with the empire of Darius, and were exhausting their force in struggles with one another. How was the language of Greece to become the language of Egypt, and of much of Asia? How was its literature to be diffused, and to become the study of all Asiatic cities? If changes took place, which should lay Persia in ruins, how was the small Jewish state to hold its place in the tempest? What event could be named beforehand, that should necessitate the embodying of the Divine oracles in the language of Plato, nearly two centuries before the end of the Jewish dispensation, and the introduction of that dispensation, which was to embrace all the nations of the earth, and make its *first* inroad on the false systems and idolatry of Asia Minor and Greece, of Egypt and Abyssinia?

All these inquiries would have been natural, and all, at the date we have supposed, would have been unanswered, and un-

answerable, except to the Jewish believer in the one leading prophecy, of a power to arise in Greece which should overthrow the dynasty of Cyrus. But the detail and development of succeeding events would have been wholly out of the reach of the most sagacious calculation, and that because they were critically dependent, humanly speaking, on the will and character of one Greek warrior. *Yet all was brought to pass.* Egypt was made a Greek kingdom. Jews became a people speaking Greek. Their oracles were committed to a new and wider custody in the Greek language. Palestine and Asia Minor became Hellenized; and the Scriptures of Christianity were given forth in the speech which all scholars of all nations had acquired. Who can then fail to discern in these revolutions, achieved in the end of the fourth century B.C., and springing from Greece, the marvellous working of that wisdom, which, leaving all human agents responsible and free, brings to pass without failure or defect, every purpose of the Divine will?

Reluctant as we are to prolong these remarks, on the character and results of the diffusion of the Greek element, in the centuries preceding the Christian era, and on the revolution effected by it in the world's history, as well as in preparation for the greater revolution of Christianity; we cannot help adverting to it in a few observations further, with a view to set forth its place and purpose, considered as *a development of intelligence*, predetermined in the counsels of Providence, both for the more facile apprehension of the revelations of Heaven, and also for the advancement of the human mind in intellectual culture and power. Particularly in the latter point of view, does it merit, we think, a deeper consideration than it has generally received, as part of the intended dispensations of Heaven, in the progress and history of mankind. Its effect on such progress has been of course frequently asserted, and perhaps sometimes exaggerated to the disparagement of that higher, and preternatural instrumentality, which was to follow the age of Greek culture.

But without allowing to it any higher claims than that of a brilliant intellectual awakening and activity, and affirming, in *this one respect*, its incalculable importance and enduring influence in the progress of the human mind; it has not been usual, we think, to consider the Greek era of intelligence and genius, as a phase of intellectual history strictly destined to take place by

Providence, as well as rendered subservient by the same heavenly direction, in subsequent ages, to the promulgation of Christian truth. But so great an engine in the culture of human thought, so mighty an advance in the development of the human faculties, cannot be justly considered as an insignificant event, or as a casual occurrence in the history of the Greek nations, much less as a development of something involving evil, and therefore disapproved of Heaven, and only permitted, like any other occurrences in the varied action and strife of fallen humanity. Whatever of good can be discerned in the higher intellectual activity of the Greek period of philosophy and genius, whatever in it can be presumed of advantage to human culture both at the time and to after ages, whatever, in a word, of benign influence, after deducting for all errors and perversions, can be affirmed to have been inherent in such development, and to be exerted by it still on human thought; this amount of what is beneficent in its influence must be deemed an intended part of Divine appointments, anterior to Christianity, for the welfare of mankind; and it were indeavour and erroneous to extricate it from the plan and arrangements of a special providence. All events, we know, the minutest as well as the most momentous in human affairs, are comprehended within the scope of the Divine foreknowledge and permission, and thus, in a virtual and larger sense, within the range of the Divine appointment.

But we mean more than this, when we speak of any beneficial occurrences, epochs, and agencies in human history. These are undoubtedly more than the permitted evolutions of things, in the plan and contemplation of Divine goodness. They are to be regarded as positive appointments, designed for the welfare of mankind; and, whether evolved in a natural order and by natural causes, or, as may often be the fact though unrevealed, by the secret action of a supernatural power, they are alike momentous dispensations of good, which were ordained to take effect, by Him who worketh everything according to the counsel of his own will, and from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. It is, then, in this light, one surely as perfectly rational as it is supremely interesting, that we are fain to regard the epoch of Greek intelligence, and to dwell on its peculiar value and purpose. For its value and influence, it may be confidently asserted to be, next to the communications of revelation, the most momentous event



in all human history, and one compared to which, revolutions and conquests, great victories, or brilliant enterprise, are as nothing; for these have their value only as they contribute to the moral and intellectual advance of mankind.

If the period of Greek development be thus admitted to be one of greatest moment in the history of the world, and hence to be ascribed to the intentions and plan of a beneficent wisdom; let it be considered how precarious its occurrence was, how brief while yet so brilliant was its continuance, and how irrecoverably it died away and perished in Greece, after the era of the Macedonian power. It is the illusion of our ordinary habit of thinking, to regard as inevitable those conjunctures of events in history, which actually took place, and to deem them the necessary evolutions of national tendencies, and national movements, in the lands where they occurred. If, in regard to political changes, we are compelled to admit the frequent critical balance of alternatives, and the consequent uncertainty and precariousness attaching beforehand to any result, we are apt to conclude, that, at least, the development of national character and national genius, whenever it takes place, is something necessitated by causes so inherent and so numerous conspiring to the result, that the event cannot be conceived to have been otherwise than as it actually happened. It is not to be doubted, that this species of result in the history of a nation, being based on a more stable and wider aggregate of causes than mere events of conquest or war, has in it more of necessary sequence than any other national change. Yet the history of Greece itself is sufficient to prove, that such necessity was not absolute as to the development of the grandest period of its genius and art. It rose into brilliance in Athens; but it had but faint parallel even at Corinth, or anywhere west of the Isthmus. And the same might be said of Boeotia, with the single exception of Pindar's name; and of all Thessaly, and northern Greece. In Attica it survived till the establishment of the Macedonian power, a space of about two centuries; after which, no eminent name in philosophy, poetry, eloquence, or art, can be pointed to. Greece still remained the land of Greeks, and Greek schools perpetuated Greek culture and speculation. But the genius of Greece was no more; imitation, criticism, rhetorical artifice followed; and the same people ceased for ever to give symptom of their ancient creative force of

intellect and of fancy. Nor have their descendants, down to our own time, given evidence, in this respect, of their being sprung from the race of Plato and Æschylus.

The inference from all these observations is, that natural and necessary as seemed the age of highest intellectual splendour in Greece, its occurrence might *not* have been; Athens might have been as Sparta, all Greece as Illyricum, and the Asiatic Greek cities, Halicarnassus, Smyrna, Miletus and Ephesus, as the cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Askelon, marts of commerce only, and not the birthplace of philosophy, the homes of Thales and Homer, of Anaxagoras and Herodotus. Hence we are brought back to the possibility of some higher cause, as determining, in the last result, the existence and era of intellectual development. It is not necessary to infer the Divine approval of all its modes and of all its effects, while yet admitting that such development was of Divine pre-ordination. Its character, direction, speculations, or fancies, were left to the natural tendencies of the Greek mind, and the circumstances of their age; but whatever it embodied of what was truth or beauty, whatever it achieved of what was just in sentiment or faultless in imitation, whatever it involved of awakening to human intellect in its own period, or exerted for awakening the minds of men in distant after times; all this we may, without presumption, refer to a Divine purpose as well as approval.

The age of Greek illumination will thus have to be regarded under new relations. It was one foreseen by Providence, permitted in its plan, perhaps by a secret influence determined into existence. It had its age and place, its purpose and consequence, fixed and ordained by a wisdom higher than that of humanity. It was a pre-ordained illumination and phase of genius in the Gentile world, and in one ancient people of European origin, permitted to relieve the darkness of heathenism, and appointed to precede Christianity, and, intellectually considered, destined to prepare for its coming. Christianity came upon the world *after*, and not before, the speculation of Greek thought; and it brought the communications of Heaven to nations already awakened to intellectual activity, and quickened into a more piercing apprehension of the discriminating forms of reason, as well as of the combinations of beauty in fancy and sentiment.

In this respect, we gaze on the unfolding light of Greek

genius, and the diffusion of its intelligence and literature through western Europe, as well as in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, as an intellectual preparation of inconceivable moment for the clear apprehension of the discoveries of Christianity; and as, under Providence, in some degree, determining, by congruity of adaptation, the cast and form, no less than the language, in which the profoundest expositions of Christianity were to be made. To say nothing of the narratives of the Christian faith, which, marked by an inimitable simplicity, have an adaptation of their own to all conditions of intellect; would the epistles of Paul or of Peter have their *fitness* in being adapted for general apprehension, or could they have been composed in the form of exposition actually given them, if the people addressed had not been elevated to a higher level of intelligence, by the preceding action and diffusion of Greek speculation and argument? Imagine the state of Europe to have been, when St. Paul wrote, the same that it was five centuries before, the same as that of the eastern nations, the same as is the condition of the New Zealanders now; and is it conceivable, that the Epistle to the Romans, or that addressed to the Greek Christians of Corinth, or the Epistle to the Hebrews, would have been given in their present lofty form of thought, and argument, and illustration? Is it not rather certain, that the sublime fulness, and argumentative statement, given to the exhibition of the Christian system, were in truth prepared for, in a degree, and demanded by the intellectual condition of Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy in the apostolic age—a condition, the direct effect of the age of Athenian genius?

Imagine this era not to have been; that Greece, and especially Athens, and the states on the Ægean, had remained dormant in thought and genius, and that, what speculation of ancient times had descended to the Christian period, had been the mythical traditions of Egypt; that the literature of Greece *had not been created*, that its language had not been perfected nor diffused, but had continued the rude speech of a wild race of pirates, like the Greeks of the reputed age of Cecrops; and under what strangely other conditions would Christianity have been issued to the world! For, with the loss of Greek development and literature, we must combine the loss of Roman literature no loss, which was a fainter imitation of the Greek, and owed its existence

and form to the inspiration of its models. And not only so; but the literature of subsequent periods of civilization would have been different; the luminous expression, the simple order of argument, the germs of philosophical speculation, the fire of poetic fancy, transmitted from Greece, would have been lost; and full half, we might almost say, of what is just and beautiful, in the merely secular literature and thought of other ages and countries, would have had no existence. In thus asserting the value and permanent effect of Greek literature on the intellectual life and progress of mankind, we do not forget the infinitely higher value of the discoveries and influence of *revelation*, even as the means of awakening the human spirit to the freest aspirations after truth. But we must still admit, that Greek intelligence is a positive element of permanent power in the mental life of civilized nations, as exhibiting the most exquisite models of dialectic, discriminate thought and argument, and of the grand and beautiful combinations of fancy.

Further, we must repeat that the diffusion of Greek literature, in the age anterior to the promulgation of Christianity, produced the effect of a wide awakening and illumination of mind in the east and west in those ages, and thus prepared the general intelligence of mankind for the readier and more perfect apprehension of the doctrines of the cross, in all their sublimity, their relations, and their evidence. In a word, in respect of the general condition of the nations, consequent upon the spread of Greek literature by the arms of the Greek conquest and empire, it was already morning in the mental state of mankind, when the doctrines of a higher revelation were issued forth, which were to disperse the mists and darkness that confined Greek speculation to the narrow circle of time, and to open the contemplations of men furtherward into eternity, on whose limitless expanse it shed the fulness of its splendour, unveiling immortality, and discovering man's relation to the government of the Invisible Supreme, as well as disclosing the purposes of God in the past dispensations of time, in preparing the glory of Messiah's advent, his death for sinners, and his resurrection and ascension to his heavenly throne. These great discoveries of revelation came not upon the human mind at that stage in which it lay dormant and dark, as in the time when the empire of Cyrus was founded. The apostles of the cross had not to encounter invincible ignorance and incapacity in their

hearers, when they first opened their heavenly message; and though they studiously forbore the use and imitation of Greek philosophy, rebuked its pride, and disdained its forms and fallacies, yet they were not unversed in its speculations, and could not but prefer to confront intelligence in a Greek, if only combined with humility and candour, rather than to meet in their hearers with imbecility and ignorance.

If, in these lengthened remarks, we have succeeded in impressing the fact of some real influence, in preparing the nations for the promulgation of Christianity, being achieved by the spread of Greek intelligence, and of the permanent influence of Greek literature on the human faculties, in every subsequent stage of intellectual advancement; we may venture to ask, whether the era of Greek development was not one of special appointment in the Divine purposes? It was the first general awakening of thought in the history of the world, from the time of the Deluge. Till the Greek period, the nations, intellectually, had slumbered from age to age. With the exception of that secluded race which shared the light of revelation in Palestine, there was, amongst the nations of antiquity, no movement of thought, no inquiry, no speculation, no research, no invention, no imagination, till the great poems of the first of the Greek bards began to be sung and repeated; or rather, as a general fact, till some centuries later, when philosophy and poetry became the employment of genius in, at first, the Greek states of Asia Minor, then, for a short period, in the towns of Græcia Magna, and last, and more eminently, in the free state of Athens, in Greece proper. How extraordinary, if contemplated justly, must seem this breaking forth of a new intelligence in the Hellenic race, about the fifth century before Christ, as contrasted with the unbroken slumber of thought from the Deluge in all nations but one, and with the general state of all other nations still, when Pythagoras first propounded maxims for silent meditation, still more when Æschylus cast his sublime conceptions and imaginations in numbers, when, somewhat later, Socrates stirred the spirit of all hearers by his doubts and inquiries, when Plato expounded his master's musings in more unfolded grandeur, and Aristotle cast the whole method of Greek inquiry into more systematic and subtle arrangement. Was not this aspect of speculation and fancy in Greece a new era in the history of mankind? Did it exhibit no difference in the history of mind? Did it imply

no resurrection of the human faculties? Did it exhibit no brightness of mental dawn in the centre of nations, after ages of unbroken gloom? Did it achieve no step of advance, if not in great discovery, in the awaking and training of faculty necessary for discovery? Did it not resolve thought for the first time into discriminate forms, in which opinions or intuitions were not entertained, as heretofore, in their unreasoned mass as maxims, but were analysed into their principles, their grounds, their relations, their dependence, and their inferences? For it was this spirit of analysis, which constituted the new character of Greek development, its differing element, and novel power. It was the piercing subtlety and earnestness of inquiry, which sought to resolve received opinions into their grounds and evidence, and made the small amount of previous knowledge current, to become germinant by the revelation of its principles, or even, by the discovery, on many questions, of its errors.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Improbability of a fourth universal empire—Such empire never possible *after* the fall of Rome—Early States of Italy—Etruria and its civilization—Original population of the small State on the Tiber—Rome in the period of her kings—Permanent influence of the religious institutions of Numa Pompilius, and of the political constitution of Servius Tullius—Change to a Republic—Wars with neighbouring small States—Subjugation of all Italy—Punic wars—War and conquest in Greece—In Asia Minor, Syria—Subjection of the Jewish State—Story of Judea, deduced from the heroic resistance of the Maccabees to the birth of our Lord—Contests of Caesar and Pompey—Conquest of Egypt by Caesar—His death—Contests of Antony and Augustus—Policy of Herod, and appointment as king of Judea—His tyranny and death—Archelaus deposed, and a Roman administration substituted in Palestine—Conditions of preparation in the state of nations, attained by Roman conquest for the times of the Christian dispensation—Wider extension of the Roman empire—Its more absolute consolidation—Intercommunity and free transit throughout the empire—Universal and perfect peace attained in Augustus' reign, and never realized before—Continuing idolatry, moral debasement, and misery of nations—Results of the Roman conquest, as affecting the history of Christianity at its origin, and in the first years of its progress—Effect in determining the birthplace of our Lord—Effect in protection afforded for a time to our Lord's ministry—Effect in determining the manner and circumstances of his death—Effect in insuring the attestations of our Lord's resurrection—Protection undesignedly afforded by it to the first movements of the Christian mission—Rome not the formal antagonist to Christianity for the first thirty years—Persecution in this period incessant, but springing from Jewish instigation, or popular outrage—Roman power in a degree the shield against these—Thus a *heaving* secured for Christianity in all lands, in consequence of the extinction of separate national authorities by Roman conquest—Illustrations of the value of such preceding political unity of nations, from facts in modern times.

THE last of the world's great empires remains to be considered by us, that of Rome. It had been predicted, in those oracles of which the Jews held possession, that another monarchy would arise after the Macedonian, of a sterner and more absolute character than either of the preceding, and which should reduce the nations of mankind under a more complete and enduring unity and organization. But, except to such as had access to

these announcements of the inspired volume, the prospect was in no degree apparent, that any such wide sovereignty as that which Alexander had achieved would ever be again seen among mankind. To the sagest of the political observers of the age next after that of Alexander, even if informed of every rising state in the furthest west, as well as the east, the probability of a new universal dominion, much less one of wider extent and intenser force in amalgamating the nations, was as nothing. It could have occurred to none of the successors of Alexander, to suspect the existing germ of such a force in the small state founded on the Tiber, which was then battling for its existence with the Samnites, or the southern tribes of Italy, or, if contemplated some period later, was involved in a deadly struggle with the powerful maritime kingdom of Carthage, with the armies of Carthage on her soil, and the most gifted and resolute of military commanders, the great Hannibal, victor at Trasymene, or advanced to the very gates of the capital. Who, at that moment, or even nearly a hundred years later, would have hazarded the prediction of a new empire of the world, and that such empire would have its seat on the Tiber? Yet, that a new and more irresistible power would arise to subjugate the nations, and grasp all kingdoms into one, in a sense never exemplified in any preceding conquests, was the express intimation of prophecy; while the bare notion of such a possibility was even unimagined by the profoundest observers of the state of nations, and, if imagined, would have been dismissed as a dream, or freak of fancy.

We wish to insist on this aspect of the fact, in the condition of human affairs, presented after the empire of Alexander had been broken into fragments, because the usual feeling of the mind, in gazing on the succession of ancient empires, is, that of unwondering acquiescence in their sequence, as if it had been perfectly natural, and inevitable, so as beforehand to involve nothing of improbability. Such a habit of judgment allows nothing to the critical and precarious character of events and conflicts among nations; and it still more tends to exclude the secret rule and purpose of Providence in determining their issue and consequences; whilst it would altogether annul the claims of prophecy, as presaging the future *under conditions of impenetrable obscurity*, or even contradictory probabilities, to the unassisted vision of man. Such is the irresistible fascination,



so to speak, of *fact*—of what has been realized in event—over the judgment, that, in our familiar acquaintance with the course of history, the whole succession of events appears so absolutely a chain, that it requires an effort of reflection to imagine it could have been otherwise linked and arranged. For example, the imperial dominion of Rome fills so vast a place in history, and exhibits so stable an order of things for many centuries, that we can hardly admit the possibility that such periods of history could have been otherwise ordered; that Rome had remained an insignificant state, contending for ages with the Gauls, and with Carthage; that the kingdoms of Macedon, Pergamus, Syria, and Egypt, had held on in their distinct power to the times of Messiah's advent, and to even the period of the Goths and Saracens; or that Carthage, and not Rome, had spread her conquests over Italy and Greece; or finally, that Macedonia had anew recruited her energies, and recovered the conquests of Alexander. All these suppositions strike upon our thoughts as nearly impossibilities. But each of them seemed to the age of the Ptolemies infinitely more probable, than the actual evolution of events which came to pass. In a word, there was, to human calculation, no probability whatever of a fourth empire, which should comprehend the civilized world; much less, that it should arise from a people and country scarcely known in the age mentioned.

That fourth empire was the *last* of such extended dominations. The series terminated with Rome. Since the fall of the Roman empire, and the formation of distinct monarchies in Europe and Asia, no universal dominion has been attained, though it has been on many occasions attempted, and in some critical periods, such as that of the Saracenic conquests, seemed on the point of being consummated. But the attempt failed; and the nations of Europe have subsisted in distinct and numerous monarchies from the time when the fourth empire was broken. What, we may ask, rendered the formation of the fourth so inevitable, any more than that we should now deem inevitable the subjugation of all Europe and Asia under one power? The fact, it is true, became otherwise with respect to the age which preceded the Christian era; but it is a mistake against all just views of the contingent and precarious in human affairs, and of that sovereign, though unobtrusive rule which controls them, without interference

with human responsibility, to deem their evolution a species of fate, admitting, had Providence so willed it, no variation, no alternative.

If we have been successful, in these remarks, in awakening a different order of reflection regarding the occurrence and fortunes of great empires, and in asserting their subordination to a higher rule, our readers are then prepared, from the point of time to which we have brought our survey of ancient empires, at the formation of the four separate monarchies of Alexander's broken empire, to view the next future possibility in a new light, as part of the determinations of Heaven, and to seek, in the permitted rise of the Roman power, some conditions of preparation and signal advantage with a view to the coming of the final dispensation of Christianity. And this, surely, is the right point of view, from which to contemplate all the revolutions of history, and especially this last and greatest in the ages preceding Christianity. Whether as exhibiting a new stage of advance in civilization, a distinct evidence of purpose in overruling Providence, or some special circumstances of preparation for the promulgation of Christianity, the formation of the fourth and last empire of the world cannot fail to offer much to interest and instruct the reflective student of history. But let us turn, for a while, to trace some important events, anterior to the rise of this new and terrible power in western Europe.

In remarks offered in an early chapter of this volume, on the migrations of the first families after the Deluge, we followed the track of the Japhethite races beyond the Hellespont in Thrace and Greece, and the Italic peninsula, and onward into the wild countries, whose line of shore terminated on a new and boundless sea, the vast Atlantic. We noticed the gradually forming states of Italy, partly composed of the primitive Pelasgic migrations, and in part, of later accessions by sea from Asia Minor, and the western tribes of Greece. Thus it is the tradition of ancient history, that a colony of *Æolic* Greeks from Phocæa, in Asia Minor, settled itself near the mouth of the Rhone, and founded Massilia, the modern Marseilles. Lower down, the state of Etruria was formed, at a far earlier period, as the ancients believed, by a colony of Lydians, who, assuming rule over the ruder first population, and importing with them into Italy the civilization, learning, and arts of Asia, formed a kingdom which had reached the highest pitch of grandeur, as to arts, commerce, and

organization, long before the date assigned to the very foundations of the city of Rome. The remains of Etruscan art are not only more ancient, but more beautiful and perfect of their order, than those of any state of Italy; and an element of refinement, of beauty of perception, and of exquisite modulation of speech, is supposed to have been transmitted down to these very times, to the Tuscan population, from this early source of Asiatic civilization cultivated in Etruria. From Etruria, Rome received her first impulse and aid in the arts of legislation, architecture, and commerce. Some of her most intelligent kings, and these not all tyrants, were of Etrurian families; and when Rome had risen to power, and commenced her aggressions, some of the earliest, as by far the wealthiest, acquisitions north of the Tiber, were the cities of the Etrurian state. The war with Veii, the nearest of the ancient Etrurian cities, was of many years' duration, and the attempt to vanquish it often foiled, and again and again resumed. The siege of that city, protracted through so many years, was the first lesson of Roman valour and perseverance in the art of capturing fortified towns.

The capture of Veii at last, after twelve years' siege, by the dictator, M. Furius Camillus, and the distribution of the Veientine wealth, mansions, and territory, amongst the plebeians of Rome, gave the Roman people that first taste of the gains of war, which kindled a spirit of aggression, that knew no rest, and found no limit, till the standards of Rome had advanced to the banks of the Euphrates. In the first age of Roman conquest, the ancient and opulent kingdom of Etruria formed its richest acquisition; and its territory, wealth, and resources, under Roman disposal, formed the base and engine of its next greater aggressions on the states south of Latium. This notice of the Etrurian state, though but incidental in the general view of ancient Italy, is much more slight and brief than its claims, as the harbinger of civilization in western Europe, would have required, if our space permitted fuller detail. It long preceded Rome in civilization and grandeur; and that part of Italy has ever since been the centre of Italic refinement and art. Amid the revolutions of kingdoms, and the mutations of language, after the fall of the Roman empire, and the torrent of Gothic irruptions had swept over Italy, even during the darkness of the middle ages, and when the ancient Latin passed into the forms of a new language, something of the

ancient brighter character of thought still lingered in Etruria; the arts found their earliest second home in Florence; the revival of learning first sprang up and flourished there; and the speech of Tuscany is still fancied to have an inimitable purity and sweetness of its own, and is the acknowledged standard of the Italian language.

Other states there were in Italy, and we have also slightly alluded to these in an earlier chapter, which long preceded Rome in civilization, and political power; and these, like Marseilles and Etruria, were of foreign origin in their colonization, and chiefly of the Greek race. The south of Italy long bore the name of Græcia Magna; and noble cities in Lucania, and round the Tarentine Gulf, had attained prosperity and grandeur, when the existence of Rome was scarcely known, out of Latium. Neapolis, Capua, Pæstum, Elea, Croton, Sybaris, Tarentum, formed the centres of independent small states, wealthy and prosperous; in the schools of art, and philosophy, of even earlier celebrity than Athens and Corinth. At Elea, or Velia, Parmenides, and his friend and disciple, Zeno, flourished, about the time of the second expedition of Persia against Greece, and founded the school which gave light and impulse to Greek speculation. At a still earlier period, Croton became the home of Pythagoras of Samos, who, when Tarquinius Superbus tyrannized over the small Roman city, founded the celebrated school which bore his name. Pæstum, or Posidonia, is now but a name; but the splendid temples of the ancient city remain, almost in a perfect state, on the low plain between the mountains and the Tyrrhene Sea, and tell of a period of art and grandeur long anterior to the celebrity of the city on the Tiber. But, before the aggressions of the little Tiborine state, all these earlier centres of political organization were ultimately to fall; the glory of Etruria in arts, and of Græcia Magna in philosophy, the resources of both in opulence and arms, were to yield before the unrelenting advance of Roman energy; nor only these states of the Italic peninsula, but kingdoms greater than Italy itself; for at last, the ancient and far-famed kingdoms of the east, and of Africa, were to be successively beaten to the ground, and to be made coalescing portions of the one empire, which was destined to hold all nations in unity, for the moment of Messiah's advent into the world. We have discharged but feebly the debt of history to these earlier states of

Italy, in the brief notice we have taken of them, as preliminary to a review of the rise and extension of Roman power. To a rapid survey of that history of the world's mighty conqueror, we shall now direct the reader's attention.

The small state which sprang up in the very centre of Italy, west of the Apennines, would appear to have been formed, not of any foreign colony, but of the hardy native population of the ancient Pelasgic race originally spread through Gaul and Italy. We lay out of account, of course, the traditions, if not, rather, late and intentional fictions, of a Trojan colony under Æneas, by which writers of the Augustan age endeavoured to enhance, as they fancied, the glory of Cæsar, and the fame of their national origin. Whether in the eloquent narrative of Livy, or in Virgil's immortal poem, such accounts must be treated as entertaining expansions, of what had become of late, perhaps, current tradition, but a tradition totally without historical evidence. Much besides, probably, of Livy's earlier chapters is of the same shadowy character; an ingenious fabrication of the most impressive stories invented, and still extant, respecting a remote and obscure period of Roman history, from which no record of any sort had descended to the times when Rome began to assume greatness and fame. All that appears indubitable respecting the Roman origin is, that it was not of foreign derivation. While Greek colonists on the north, in Etruria and Massilia, mingling with the native population, introduced and advanced civilization and arts; and in the south, numerous small states consisted wholly of such Greek colonies, and preceded the states of Greece proper, in the celebrity of their schools and arts; in central Italy, an aggregate of the tribes or families dwelling on the south bank of the Tiber, became gradually united in a single polity, perhaps at first in Alba Longa, and afterwards in a new city on the yellow Tiber, which was to give, in after centuries, law to the whole civilized world. The unmixed character of this people, their unacquaintance with eastern civilization and arts, and their poverty, combined with a conscious and self-relying energy, would seem to have contributed to the formation of that compact, dauntless, iron hardihood, which characterized their after history, and which was needed, in its first stages, to face the brunt of conflicts with so many near opponents, and afterwards, to animate and sustain their career of conquest. By the wealthy state of

Etruria, with its populous and fortified cities, pressing on the north of the Tiber, this insignificant combination, south of it, of a few Latin families, was held in utter contempt. Nor did the Sabine and Samnite races, also of the hardy native population, hold it in higher esteem. And it was separated from the softening influence of Greek civilization on the south, by the intermediate territories of the other rude Italic tribes, which we have just named.

In the year B.C. 753, if we are to rely on the generally accepted chronology of the event, were commenced the first rude buildings of that city on the seven hills near the Tiber, which the little Latin community destined for its capital, without hope or presage, however, of its future grandeur, power, and endurance. About the time when Isaiah sang of the hopes of Israel, when the first monarchy of the world stood at the height of grandeur in Nineveh, when Egypt was still advancing in greatness under her native rulers, when the Greek states of Asia Minor had not been subjugated to foreign rule, nor even the monarchy of Lydia formed, when, in Greece, Sparta alone under Lyncurgus, if tradition speak truly, had been organized under the forms of specific legislation, while Athens and Corinth were but maritime villages under chiefs, and Macedon was unheard of, the city of Rome was founded, and the Roman families were first united and organized under political rule. Full seven centuries were to elapse before its destiny should be realized in attaining to the dominion of the world: and the stages of its advance were at first slow and gradual; but its advance continued, in spite of difficulties and perils, till the limit of its empire was reached, and the nations of the civilized world, despoiled of glory, power, independence, and all distinct interests, were subjected to the one law of the Tiberine state, and reduced to the unity of a single, well-compacted empire.

The history of this advance and growth of the small state thus founded on the Tiber, must ever be an object of interest and wonder to the student. We are concerned, in this review, only to specify the principal stages of its progress, so as to exhibit an intelligible outline of the process by which its extension took place. From the germ, or the acorn, which we have seen planted, as tradition tells, by the hand of Romulus, in the early period named, it took full seven centuries for it to reach to the full

growth and expansion of the tree which cast its shade over the world. From the first days, when the little Latin community resolved on realizing for themselves a distinct position and name in central Italy, by founding a town on the Tiber, to the period when a mandate from this same town was omnipotent on the Euphrates, on the Nile, on the Rhine, and on the rocky heights of Mauritania, such was the period of struggle, expansion, and conquest, which it required for the consummation of its destiny. It took nearly five of these centuries to achieve only the subjugation of Italy, from the Alps to the Tarentine waters, but the conquest and consolidation of the peninsula once completed, its advance from this point became rapid, and, after one severe, perilous struggle, irresistible. This was the struggle with Carthage, an ancient kingdom, which, at the fifth century of the Roman period, had risen to the acme of its power, and was possessed not only of the undisputed command of the Mediterranean, but also held, besides its wide African territories, the greater part of Spain, and all of Sicily, with the exception of Syracuse. Two great wars, extended, though with an interval of peace, over more than half a century (264 to 202 B.C.), determined the strife between Carthage and Rome; and, after a struggle, which stained every field of Italy with blood, and in which Rome beheld the enemy twice near her gates, the contest ended with a Roman victory on the plain of Zama near Carthage, which dictated terms of absolute subjection to the latter state, together with the cession of Sicily and Spain to Rome, and, a few years after, was followed by the destruction of the ancient city of the Tyrian colonists in Africa. Then followed the war with Macedon, ending in the conquest of Greece; and afterwards the Mithridatic war, with the sovereign who held the chief part of Asia Minor, and with the neighbouring monarch of Syria, Antiochus; all ending with the like result, of the mastery and dominion of the Italic state. The conquest of Egypt was the last great accession in the east and south; and in the end, the line of Roman dominion reached along Africa from the Straits of Calpe to the Nile, and was stretched eastwards beyond the great river, and northwards to the Belgic shore over against Britain.

Though the plan and design of our work forbid us to pursue these notices with the minuteness of history, yet, with a view to raise up before the reader's mind something more of the living

picture, if we can do so, of the growth of this fourth empire, from its mean origin to its terrible, undisputed, and sole mastery of the civilized world, at the moment of our Lord's advent, we will retrace our steps for a while, and mark the successive stages of its advance a little more minutely and distinctly, from the commencement. Nor would it suffice, for our object, to do this alone in respect of the extension of the Roman dominion outwardly, in its advance from territory to territory, without also attempting to cast some light on that *internal history* of the successive changes in the organization of the state, in virtue of which it was, that the energies of the Roman character were developed, and the ambition of a class became the ambition and fierce purpose of a people, impelled on the great enterprise of subjugating the world. In truth, the peculiar characteristic of the Roman power is wholly unintelligible, without advertence to this inner element, of its popular excitement, and passion. Roman armies conquered, not as followers of a general, but as citizens of a state, of which every soldier shared some part of the power and spoil, and permanent glory. Hence the history of Rome must be studied along the course of two parallel developments; the *internal extension of right and power* to the plebeian mass of the community; and next, the *external extension of the power of the state*, which was a result of energy infused by the former changes, in conquest over other states and nations.

We will note the chief steps of advance, in each of these lines of its development, marking the stages attained on each parallel, at particular periods, sometimes in distinct series, and at other times in their intermingled relation and action.

Commencing with its external position and advance, we remark, that, according to its ancient traditions, Rome began as a small polity, centred in a little fortified town on the Tiber, and under the rule at first of monarchs, commencing with the wolf-nurtured Romulus, and descending in his successors, in a series of six monarchs, to Tarquinius Superbus, with whom the monarchical period ended. This period reaches to nearly 250 years from the founding of Rome. How far this traditionary history is to be held authentic, is not a question for us here to enter on; our object being merely to sketch the ordinary representation, much as it has been usually given. The expansion of Rome externally, under the monarchy, was slender. It was, in fact, held in severe



check by the power of the Etrurian state north of the Tiber, and by the fiercer character of the Samnite tribes on the south of Latium. But internally, its history is not without memorable occurrences. For in the series of its kings are enumerated Numa Pompilius and Servius Tullius, the administration of each of whom wrought lasting change and improvement on the character and condition of the early Roman community. The first, by his intense devotedness to the subject of religious duty, under whatever darkness in its idolatrous relations, brought the minds of Romans under that awful sense of the rule of the unseen power of the gods, which engraved a reverence for sacred and moral obligations on the heart of the people, in a degree unexampled in the history of any people of the ancient world, under the dominion of heathenism.

This reverence characterized the Roman people, fierce and hardy as they were, in a signal manner, and contrasted them, as a people, at least in their interior life, advantageously, in the comparison with states greatly more advanced in general civilization, literature, philosophy, and art. And it was a character which endured for ages, insomuch that Polybius, writing in the second century B.C., remarks, that, whereas, among other nations, the obligation of oaths, or other moral engagements were of slender force, among the Romans, down to his own time, they were permanent and almost inviolate. This fear of the gods was of marked influence, in the power by which the soldiery were held to their military oath, and often served the state in critical perils, by the dread of Divine vengeance, if they deserted their position or duty. That it was of equal tenacity in transactions with foreign states, cannot be perhaps affirmed; yet on the whole, it had influence; and, whereas expediency and policy alone entered, prominently, into questions of preserving treaties among Carthaginians, Greeks, or Asiatics, there remained to the last in Rome some sense of fear, if treaties, guarded by oath, were violated in their letter, or their chief purport. For the source and strength of this peculiarity in the Roman character, we must refer to the institutions, formed with so much solemnity, and armed by the superadded pretension of a heavenly inspiration, by their third monarch, Numa Pompilius. This early religious institution stamped their character with religious restraint. The next great change was of a political kind, and gave the first elements of order, law, and liberty, guarded by in-

stitutions, to their political organization. It will be perceived, that we refer to the constitution of Servius Tullius, which is so prominent an event in the early history of Rome, under her monarchs.

Servius Tullius gave the Romans, at a very early period of their history, and when their territory had not yet been enlarged by encroachment on neighbouring tribes, a constitution, in its main provisions and popular aim, not unlike that which the Athenian sage gave to Attica. Like Solon, he set aside the distinction of birth in the census of the people, and distributed them, according to property, into five classes; each of which he further divided into so many centuries, which gave them the like number of suffrages or votes in the *Comitia Centuriata*. He divided the Roman people further, locally, into tribes or wards, according to residence, whether in the city, or in the country without its walls, and gave to these, also, an assembly, called the *Comitia Tributa*. In both these assemblies, of the centuries, and of the tribes, although the larger proportion of votes, or of influence, fell to the patrician class, a distinct *status* and voice were given to the plebeians, and the popular element intermingled its influence in the administration of the state. Thus the principles of order and law became early allied to the energy of the popular will; yet the latter was held long in such restriction, as to prevent that democratic licence, which so soon overset the balance of the Athenian state, and made its action and decisions so often fickle and precipitate. From this point, if we except the interruption of the tyranny of Tarquinius Superbus, the popular will gained, though by incessant effort and struggle with the patricians, more and more influence in the state; and the history of the Roman constitution is the *history of this advance*, and of these struggles, renewed and carried on for centuries, but generally by constitutional means; till at last, all the chief offices of the state, the consulship not excepted, became accessible to the plebeian order, and dependent on the vote of their great popular assemblies.

Such, in virtue of the arrangements instituted, first by Numa Pompilius, in binding the community under the solemnities of religion, and next by Tullius, in the well-balanced union of all ranks in the state politically, became the character and condition of the small township of Rome, with its adjacent rural population, before it had achieved even a single district of territorial conquest. That its capacity, and perhaps tendency, for such acquisitions,

became enhanced by this double organization cannot be doubted. The Romans became intensely compacted, and disciplined, as a people, informed with one spirit and common interest, before they entered on the career of aggression and conquest, even on the territory of neighbouring tribes in the Italic peninsula.

The tyranny of Tarquinius followed the long reign of Servius Tullius, and his constitution was abrogated, but not before its principles had taken root, so as to revive again under happier auspices. The cruelty and outrage perpetrated by Tarquin hastened the crisis. He was deposed and driven into exile. Monarchy was for ever abrogated ; and a republic, under the direction of two annual Consuls, established. This was in the year 245 from the founding of Rome, or the year 509 before Christ ; about the period when Darius was meditating his first expedition into Thrace, and when, in Palestine, the restored Jewish tribes were gaining their first consolidation under Ezra and Zerubbabel, after the dedication of the second Temple.

We shall not touch, with the like minuteness, on the subsequent stages of the Roman history. Our wish has been to cast as strong a light as our limits permit on that early period, in which the character of the little Roman community, as fitted for the further acquisition of power, was in great degree formed, though it could give, as yet, no token of the future greatness in reserve for it

As a republic, the first and only one in western Europe, its activity became immediately apparent. The purposes of the little state were the interest of the many, and were inflamed by the popular passion for aggrandizement. It soon involved itself in disputes with neighbouring tribes, and was not slow to try in each case the chance of force. Its struggles were often perilous, but its perseverance and fortitude brought it out, at last, in each case victor. It had its wars with the Latins, that is, the population of Latium, from a portion of which the Roman people had sprung ; then with the Volscians, a people in the same territory ; afterwards with the Veientes, its near neighbours, north of the Tiber. Successful in these, it tasted of the delights of conquest and rapine, and aspired to larger conquests, with the accumulated resources of its first acquisitions. The chief states with which it had to contend were Etruria, and the kingdom of the Gauls beyond the Apennines on the north ; and the Samnites, and the Greek states

of Græcia Magna in southern Italy. These were encountered at times singly; and at other times the Roman state, being now co-extensive with Latium, had to sustain the assault of the northern and southern states at the same moment; the dread of the restless aggressions of Rome uniting both north and south against her. But in the end she conquered. The popular spirit which animated the whole state, the solemn hold of the military oath upon her soldiers, binding them to an absolute subjection to their commanders, and the unyielding fortitude of their character, both in daring and under defeat, broke the strength, or wore out the endurance and resources of state after state; till at last, about the year of Rome 488 (266 B.C.), Italy was completely subjugated to the Tiberine state, from the foot of the Alps to the Gulf of Tarentum.

But how small a part was this of Rome's destined progress, to be mistress only of the Italic peninsula; and this extent, attained after the labour, suffering, and struggles of nearly five centuries! How improbable, even at this point, would it have seemed to the nations of that time, that Rome would achieve the empire of the world! In fact, each advance called forth against her only a wider combination of the greater kingdoms already risen to power, and some of these, the remains of mighty empires and monarchies. In the last struggle with the Tarentines, Rome had to contend with a foreign enemy, Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, who assisted the Tarentines with all the force of his kingdom, and inflicted on the Roman arms terrible and humiliating defeats. He at last withdrew from Italy, and Rome recruited her energy, and established her power firmly throughout the peninsula. Her next struggle was with Carthage, in which war, reduced at one time to contend for existence on her own soil, Rome ultimately conquered, and added to her territory, Sicily, Spain, and the African dominions of Carthage, Numidia, and Mauritania. These new provinces became the base of empire, for attempts on nations lying to the east. Greece, the land of ancient fame, of arts, and philosophy, lay near; and Roman ambition, still more inflamed by success and rapacity, soon found opportunities for interfering in disputes between the chief kingdom and some of the smaller states; and, by taking up the cause of Athens and of the Ætolians against Macedon, commenced a war with the latter, which ended in adding the whole of Greece, Macedon, and Thrace to the Roman

empire. This result was attained by the victory of Flaminius over Philip, at Cynoscephalæ, B.C. 197.

The independence of Greece, it is true, was at first proclaimed by Flaminius; but such independence ended, not many years later, by the defeat of Perseus at Pydna, in the utter subjugation of Greece, together with Epirus, Illyricum, and Macedonia, to the rule of the Roman people. Thus fell the *first* of the great monarchies, into which the empire of Alexander had been broken, into the grasp of a more stern and resolute power, sprung up, as we have seen, from small and contemptible beginnings on the Tiber. By this power was now held the whole of western Europe, south of Mount Hæmus, and of the mountain chain which connects it with the Rhetian Alps, and including even much of Gaul; the whole of Spain, and, in Africa, the provinces of the ancient kingdom of Carthage. With this immense extent of empire, with its resources in wealth, and in a hardy population available for recruiting her armies, Rome pushed her aggressions boldly eastward beyond the Hellespont.

In the wars of Macedon with Rome, Antiochus the Great, monarch of Syria, another of the four kingdoms constituted after the death of Alexander, had formed an alliance with Philip; and subsequently, when Philip had been defeated, had advanced with his armies into Greece, at the invitation of the Ætolians, with a view to rescue Greece from the Roman yoke. He was defeated at Thermopylæ, and again in Asia Minor, at Magnesia near the Hermus, and forced wholly to withdraw from Asia Minor to his Syrian dominions. After his repulse, the kingdom of Pergamus rose to higher power in Asia Minor; and in the disputes between this kingdom and Syria, its southern neighbour, under Antiochus, Rome pursued its usual policy, of supporting the weak against the strong, in its more open measures; while gradually establishing its influence over the first, in order ultimately to reduce both into subjection. The kingdom of Pergamus, which extended over nearly all Asia Minor west of the Halys, rose, for a short interval, as we have intimated, to a high pitch of splendour; and its capital on the river Caicus, under Eumenes II., and succeeding monarchs, was enlarged and beautified, so as to rival even Alexandria in grandeur, and more particularly in the extent of its far-famed library, which contained all the richest remains of Greek literature, and of the ancient records of eastern learning.

This city was reserved to a still more illustrious remembrance in a later age, by having become the seat of a flourishing Christian church, to the angel of which one of the messages of the Divine Redeemer was addressed in the revelations given to the last survivor of the apostles.

The influence of Rome was so securely advanced over the monarchs of Pergamus, by constant acts of interference for its protection, or by special distinction conferred on her kings personally, that at last, in the year B.C. 133, Attalus III., on his death-bed, made a bequest of the entire kingdom in his will, to the Roman republic. Here was an acquisition, which included the dominions of ancient Troy, the wealthy maritime states of the Asiatic Greek colonies, and the first kingdom of Croesus, richest of ancient monarchs, devolved by a single act to the Italic people, and reduced to a Roman province; and thus the *second* of the four kingdoms of Alexander's successors fell into its destined place, as part of the fourth empire of the world. Two of these monarchies were left, that of Antioch or Syria, and Egypt; the latter involving the interests of the intermediate territory of Palestine. The event with respect to these could be no longer doubtful, though it was for some period delayed. The progress of the Roman arms, southward from Asia Minor, was suspended by the growth of a formidable antagonist east of the Halys, in the monarchy of Mithridates, King of Pontus. This kingdom lay on the confines of the newly-acquired Roman province of Pergamus; and its sovereign resolved, if possible, to arrest at that limit the aggression of the European republic, or rather to drive back the Romans beyond the Hellespont, and to tread out the vestiges of its power in Asia. After having made the necessary preparations, Mithridates broke in with his armies into the new Roman province beyond the Halys, and, overpowering the garrisons, made himself completely master of it. The republic was not slow to avenge this insult, and Sylla, afterwards the Roman Dictator—for we are now descended to his times—was sent over to Asia with a powerful force to assert the ascendancy of the republic. This was in 87 B.C.; and the Mithridatic wars followed, which were some of the fiercest of those in which Rome became involved. Mithridates was twice defeated by Sylla, and sued for peace; but the war was again renewed by the provocation of the Roman conquerors, and the victories of Lucullus, the Roman

Consul, and after him, of the great Pompey, terminated the struggle not only in the recovery of their recent province, but in the conquest and subjection of the kingdom of Pontus, and thus in reducing the whole interior of Asia Minor under the Italian rule. These were the provinces of the lands of the dispersion, so to speak, in after times, whither the Jewish people wandered for purposes of traffic, long before the fall of Jerusalem; and they were laid open to the access, and quiet abode of such immigrants, in the period now reviewed, by the conquering arms of Rome under Sylla, Lucullus, and Pompey the Great.

The era, to which these events have brought us, is now close upon the limit of ancient history, and hastens rapidly to the dawn of a *new time*, in the commencement of the Christian period. Its remaining events will not detain us long, though full of interest, as the completion of the vast outline of dominion, given to be consummated in the destiny of Rome. The chief of them are, the conquest of Syria, then, of Palestine, and last, of Egypt, round to Cyrene, where the line of Roman dominion meets its other extreme, advancing on the coast of Africa.

After the defeat of Mithridates, Pompey, now general in the east, determined to finish the war by the complete subjugation of the remaining kingdoms, west of the Euphrates. This design he accomplished. He again defeated Mithridates in a final battle near the last-named river, and also vanquished his powerful ally, Tigranes, king of Armenia. Thus another great kingdom, lying near the sources of the Tigris and Euphrates, was added to the Roman empire, and ultimately constituted into a Roman province. Pompey's next movement was against the monarchy of Syria, whose strength had been already broken in previous contests; and now its resources were no match against the disciplined force of the Romans, directed by the greatest of her generals. This great monarchy, worn out with civil wars in the contests of different branches of the Seleucidæ for the throne, had become united to Armenia for a short time, but was involved in the defeat and overthrow of Tigranes. Antiochus Asiaticus, one of its ancient ruling family, again assumed the sceptre, but held it only for a few years. Pompey deposed him 69 B.C., and at the same time abolished the monarchy of the Seleucidæ, and the independence of Syria, and constituted Syria, together with Phœnicia, the maritime territory of such ancient fame, running

from Antioch to Tyre, into a new province of the empire. This was the *third* great portion of the Alexandrine conquests, now grasped with firmer tenure by the Roman republic.

This acquisition brought the line of Roman conquest on to the boundaries of that *land of promise*, which had been given in centuries now far remote to the race of Israel, and in which the two restored tribes of that race, first, under the patronage and shelter of Persia, and next, under the equally favourable auspices and protection of Egypt, had gradually advanced to a prosperous state, and, at the time to which we are now arrived, had become in great degree independent. From the restoration, given them by the decree of Cyrus, B.C. 536, they had shared a deep tranquillity, favourable to their perfect re-establishment, under the shadow of the Persian monarchy, for full two hundred years, to the downfall of that kingdom, and the substitution of a Greek dominion over Asia and the world. The victories of Alexander disturbed not their prosperity and development as a nation. They were brought into wider relations with other kingdoms. Numbers of them gained full recognition and favour as a colony in Egypt. Their Scriptures were translated into the language of European philosophy, and the access to them laid open to the learned of all nations. Under the Ptolemies, the nation enjoyed security, as well as patronage, for a space of full 150 years, and thus they had grown into a considerable state in the land of their fathers.

But about 170 B.C., the struggles of Syria with Egypt for Palestine had conferred the advantage on the former; and the freedom, almost amounting to independence, which had been given them for three and a half centuries, was interrupted, and the national faith submitted to a trial which menaced its utter extinction. Antiochus Epiphanes not only sought to oppress them as a nation, but was inflamed with an insane fury against the religion of the true God, which the Jews of the restoration had cultivated with a fidelity and an inflexible zeal far superior to the example of their fathers. It was the fixed determination of Antiochus, to compel their abandonment of the religion of their Divine oracles, and efface every vestige of its rites and observances. Invasion after invasion broke upon Judea. Jerusalem was captured, and the temple of God profaned. Every art was tried to seduce the people into conformity with the practices of heathenism, and in many instances not without success. But the chief part continued



faithful to the covenant of heavenly truth, and bore with serene fortitude every privation and suffering in its defence. Martyrdom for the truth, probably the first instances in the history of the world, became frequent in Jerusalem and other cities of Judea. At last, Mattathias, one of the priesthood dwelling at Modin, commenced a war of resistance, and, with his brave sons, afterwards denominated the Maccabees, succeeded in defeating the military forces which occupied different positions. Judas Maccabæus, at length, recovered possession of the capital, and having purified the temple, dedicated it anew to the worship of God, amid the tears and thanksgivings of tens of thousands. The yoke of Syria was broken, and the impious and infatuated tyrant, who had sought to extinguish the memory of their religion, soon after perished miserably, in an expedition against other insurgents at Babylon.

The result, ultimately, of this successful resistance of the nation under the Maccabees, was the formation of a kingdom independent both of Egypt and Syria, under the rule of the heroic chiefs who had achieved their deliverance. Jonathan succeeded his brother Judas Maccabæus; and Simon, the last of the sons of Mattathias, followed Jonathan, as ruler and high priest at Jerusalem. The kingdom—for it had now become formally constituted and recognised under that name—descended to the sons and grandsons of Simon, and the sceptre was held, now at the period of the Roman conquests in Syria and Armenia, by Hyrcanus II, the great grandson of Simon. But at this point of later Jewish history, dissensions arose in the Asmonean family, which opened the way to the usurpation of Antipater, the father of Herod the Great, and led to the formation of the Idumean or Herodian dynasty. Alexander Jannæus had subjugated Idumea, and had attached it as a province to the kingdom of Judea; so that from this time the Jewish state comprehended all the territory, from the sources of the Jordan down to the confines of the Arabian Desert. But this acquisition led to results fatal to the native race of Jewish kings. Antipater, one of the chiefs of the descendants of Edom, had recommended himself by his valour to the confidence of Hyrcanus, a prince of upright character, but deficient in the energy which had distinguished his race. Hence the crafty Idumean gradually gained the ascendant influence in the palace; and Aristobulus, the younger

brother of Hyrcanus, rightly judging that Hyrcanus ruled only in name, openly revolted; and a civil war ensued, in the very crisis, when the army of Pompey, having captured Damascus, was in movement towards the confines of Judea. Both parties appealed to the Roman general, and each offered the munificent sum of 400 talents, in order to ensure his patronage. Pompey affected much impartiality, and took time to deliberate.

Aristobulus was at this time in possession of Jerusalem, and Pompey's aim was to become master of the city. Aristobulus, divining the purpose of his delay and pretence of negotiation, prepared the defences of the capital for resistance. But apprehensive of the result, he went forth to meet Pompey, on his approach near the city, and made offers of a larger sum, and of the surrender of the capital. Meanwhile, the stronger party in Jerusalem immediately shut the gates, and determined to defend the city. Aristobulus was thrown into chains, and Pompey's legions approached to attack the fortifications. The event was not long doubtful. The Roman army was at that time at the very highest point of its efficiency, both in discipline, valour, and military resources; and there had been no union of effort among the Jewish people; nor, even if they had not been enfeebled by dissension, had there been time to prepare for resistance. Perhaps, indeed, no preparation would have availed in a single city, or a single small state, against the overwhelming weight of the Roman forces. But, at least, no such struggle ensued as that which so long defied and baffled the arms of Rome, about 120 years after this time, in Vespasian's reign; when Jerusalem was razed to the ground, and its foundations submitted to the ploughshare. The military engines of Pompey soon swept the walls of its defenders, and the scaling-ladders were soon mounted by warriors to whom battle was an eager and maddening delight. Sylla's son, Faustus, led the first party through the breach, and, after a desperate struggle, the Romans captured the city, and gained possession of the temple, the grand object of their efforts. Pompey was deterred by no religious awe from penetrating into the Holy of Holies; where, finding no statue, or symbol of any divinity, the Pagan general was filled with astonishment. But he found there what he had expected, untold riches in gold; the golden table and candlesticks, stores of precious frankincense, and the sum of two thousand talents in the

treasury. All these treasures, Pompey, with a magnanimity and generosity in accordance with his general character, left untouched; and having nominated Hyrcanus to the sovereignty, and fixed a tribute for the whole country, he left Jerusalem, taking with him Aristobulus, and his two sons and two daughters, as prisoners to Rome.

Thus fell Judea under the power of the great *fourth* empire of the world, which had gradually stretched its dominion from the Tiber to the banks of the Euphrates. Thus different was the event to Jerusalem, of the Alexandrian, and of the Roman conquests. The former, being met with peaceful and voluntary submission, resulted in the substitution of a mild protectorate, with very light tribute, in place of the previous sway of Persia. The latter, commencing in struggle and the capture of the city, and inaugurated with bloodshed and bitterness, resulted in a more complete subjugation, and gave omen of the woe and disaster which should, at last, overwhelm at once the country and the race of the Jews. But this was not yet to be. Near a century and a half was to follow, in which a monarchy, essentially Jewish, but with a new dynasty, was to grow into prosperity and greatness.

The important circumstance to remark at this crisis is, that the extension of Roman conquest did *not* result *now* in the event, which was its *last consequence*. On the contrary, we see the perpetuity of the inheritance of Palestine, the continuance of the nation in its unity and greatness, the continuance of their religion in its rites and sacrifices, in the temple which was the one only possible centre of these institutions, all ensured amid the perils of a struggle with Roman arms, and preserved, as it was indispensable to the purposes of Divine mercy and wisdom that they should be preserved, to the very times of the coming of the Desire of nations, and till after the promulgation of that new dispensation, founded in the death and resurrection of Messiah, that was to go forth on the broad pathway, levelled by Roman victories, over the length and breadth of the civilized world.

We shall afterwards have to touch on the conditions and consequences, secured by this great event of the Roman conquest of Judea, in reference to the attestations, and the promulgation of Christianity. It is only necessary, at this point, to add a few sentences, by way of deducing Jewish history, under the paramount,

but not severe control of the Roman republic, and soon of the imperial rule, down to the time of the birth of our Lord. It is from a far-off point in antiquity, that we have had to conduct the process of great changes, down to this *bright limit of a grander change*, spread across the whole breadth of history, and dividing it from the past, like the dawn from the darkness. *Anterior* to this limiting time, and along the whole expanse of ages from the Deluge to the Nativity of Christ, through all that extent which we have traversed in these pages, it is a scene of darkness, moral and religious, which the eye for ever beholds, even amid the extension of civilization, intelligence, and Greek philosophy and literature. But, *from this limit downward*, the whole aspect of human life in the nations assumes a new cast and character; and, in comparison with former ages, a sea of brightness and moral beauty spreads out before us, in looking down the centuries, after the proclamations of the doctrine of the cross on the day of Pentecost.

But let us recur, for a moment, to the era of the Roman conquest of Judea, and specify the chief events of Jewish story, down to the evening, when strangers from an eastern clime, with travel-stained garb and sandals, presented themselves in the hall of Herod, at Jerusalem, to ask where the birth of the new King of Israel was to take place. It is on *Judea*, that the converging rays, from all points of ancient history, must at last centre. *There* it is, that the grand consequences and results, flowing from the establishment of successive empires, are seen to meet, in respect of the fulfilment of the Divine purposes in preparing for the advent of the Redeemer, and the promulgation, through his name, of that Dispensation, which was to be testified to all nations, and to change the face of the world. Conditions must be secured *there*, and preparations advanced, indispensable alike to the fulfilment of prophecy, and to the attestations and spread of a new faith. The perpetuity of the Jewish state to the times of Messiah was *one* of these; and we have seen how, amid the revolutions of great empires, since the restoration under Cyrus, this condition was maintained. The torrent of European conquest, under Alexander, which swept over Asia, and the subsequent flux and reflux of foreign dominion over Palestine, in the struggles of Egypt and Syria—all these left the little Jewish state *still safe*, and in complete possession of all the rich

inheritance of the Divine oracles, and Divine law and institutions, committed to the people of Israel in the wilderness. Whatever of revealed truth had been given to their fathers, from the beginning, at sundry times and in divers manners, *still was safe*, in the possession of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. These tribes still occupied the land given to Abraham, still meditated the law given through Moses, and still fulfilled, each morning and evening, each month, each year, the holy observances of the worship of the true God, instituted now more than fifteen centuries before. One fearful crisis befell them, of persecution for their faith, about a century before the arrival of Pompey on their borders, but they had come forth out of the struggle a people more purified, and more devoted to the service of God. Their war of resistance, not ventured on till after the streets of their holy city had streamed with the blood of martyrs, and their temple had been polluted, ended in establishing their independence, and in giving a new impetus to their national prosperity.

Thus the Jewish state was by the especial providence of Heaven continued, though empires and monarchies had fallen around it, and many distinct peoples of antiquity on its borders, such as the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, had either become extinct, or had lost their nationality, by being merged in surrounding populations. The second temple stood, and was still to remain, till the coming of Messiah, an event now distant only by an interval of some fifty years. The Passover, and the feasts of Pentecost and Tabernacles were still observed; the daily offerings, and sacrifices, as well as the great annual atonement, were still accomplished in the temple; while its walls, each morning, resounded to the chanted hymns, given forth, in long-past ages, from the rapt utterance of the Sweet Singer of Israel, and of succeeding prophets and bards. And now the tide-flood of the Roman conquest, of the ancient small state on the Tiber, had spread to the confines of the land of Immanuel; and though it might flow even "unto the neck," it was not to destroy the national existence, but to subside for a time, and all but retire, leaving the kingdom of Judah for yet many years nearly independent. In other words, Roman power did not interfere with, much less assail, or attempt to extinguish, the unity of the nation, or their institutions, in which that unity was centred, but left them

undisturbed ; and the conquests of the Italic race became, under Divine Providence, a protection to the Jewish state, as the power of Cyrus, of Alexander, and of the Ptolemies had been, through the preceding centuries, and afforded a new security for its continuance unto the times appointed—times which were now fast approaching.

But not simply preservation to such times was indispensable, with respect to the advent of our Lord, but many other conditions had to be ascertained, in order to the fulfilment of prophecy, in its minutest particulars. The very place of his birth, and again the very manner of his death, and further, the security of the perfect attestations of his resurrection, were points to be provided for in the coming contingencies of time, in relation to the Jewish people ; and we shall see, that Roman conquest, and at length the Roman sovereignty, and more immediate dominion, and administration over Judea, were to be critically concerned in ensuring such conditions as we have just named, together with many others which we shall have to notice in their proper place. The allusions to these points, now made, will be sufficient to awaken the reader's interest in the remaining parts of Jewish history, which bring us to the time of our Lord's nativity.

Hyrcanus II., as we have said, a descendant of the Maccabean family, was confirmed by Pompey the Great in the sovereignty of Judea, on his departure from Jerusalem ; while, under this native prince, Antipater, the Idumean general, a descendant of Esau, held the chief power. After the death of this crafty Edomite, his son Herod succeeded to the command of the army, and soon usurped the whole government, the aged Hyrcanus being only left at the head of the priesthood. Such usurpation would have been of short date, unless permitted by the Roman masters of the world ; and Herod's chief policy, therefore, was to secure at any cost the favour of the successive Roman generals, who attained the chief influence in the republic. That republic was now to undergo terrific intestine commotions, yet without abatement of a particle of its sway over foreign and distant realms. The struggles of Marius and Sylla for power, and the proscriptions in which they issued, had already bathed in blood the capital on the Tiber. The noblest and most ancient of the Roman patrician families had been decimated in these contests, and struggles were yet to follow, and more blood to flow.

After the brief union of Pompey and Crassus with Julius Cæsar, recently become illustrious by the conquest of Gaul, and the invasion of Britain, the Triumvirate was dissolved, and Cæsar openly contended for the chief power. Pompey was adopted by the senate as its general, to protect the republic, and was supported by the best and most patriotic of Roman statesmen, by Cicero, Cato, Brutus, Claudius Marcellus, and Q. Metellus Scipio, and, in a word, by the chief families that truly cared for the stability of the Roman state. Cæsar, in defiance of the prohibition of the senate, crossed the Rubicon with his legions, and advanced towards Rome; while Pompey, distrusting the fidelity of the soldiers, withdrew with his party, first to Brundisium, and thence across the Adriatic to Dyrrachium in Greek Illyria. Cæsar, being master of Rome and Italy without a struggle, followed, with his army, after his rival into Greece, and defeated him in the battle of Pharsalia. Pompey fled to Egypt, which country was still under the Ptolemies, but in alliance with Rome; but on landing, he was cruelly murdered on the shore, B.C. 48. Cæsar, only three days later, arrived in Egypt, and, moved to tears at the death of his great rival, commanded his murderers to be executed, and ordered a monument to be erected over his remains.

The long-deferred crisis of the Egyptian monarchy of the Ptolemies was now come, and Egypt was to fall, like the other kingdoms of the east, under the absolute power of the Roman fasces. There existed the usual opportunities for Roman interference, in disputes for the sovereignty between the last descendants of Ptolemy Lagus, Alexander's great general. These were the famous Cleopatra and her brother Ptolemy. Cæsar insisted on the former sharing the royal power, and, resistance being made by the party of Ptolemy, a war in the city, called the Alexandrian war, ensued, in which the great Roman general became accidentally exposed to such imminent peril, that he but narrowly escaped by swimming to one of his own ships, lying at anchor in the port. His troops, however, soon dispersed the forces of Ptolemy, and the latter being drowned in the Nile during the tumult, Cleopatra became sole sovereign, but in entire dependence on the protection of Cæsar and of Rome. Cæsar, after this brief war, completed the overthrow of Pompey's party in his African campaign. The forces under Scipio and Cato were defeated, in the battle of Thapsus; and Numidia, in consequence of Juba having

sided with Cato, was reduced into a Roman province, and committed to the avaricious rule of Crispus Sallust, afterwards the celebrated historian. Thus Africa, from Mauritania to the Nile, became part of the Roman empire. The limits of the imperial extension had now in a manner been reached; and Cæsar, on his return to the capital, celebrated his four triumphs, one over Gaul, the second over Egypt, the third over Pontus or Asia Minor, and the fourth over Juba, or the acquisition of Numidia.

The conquest of the civilized world had been completed, and the city of Romulus gave law to nations, which had been, before that period, and again, after the fall of the Roman empire became, the heads of separate empires.

Julius Cæsar, now master of the Roman state, adopted, after the complete success of his arms, a policy eminently liberal and lenient towards his former adversaries. His natural disposition was generous and humane, except as it was overborne by an insatiable ambition; and he had gifts of intellect and heart, which, had his life been spared, would have disposed and enabled him to give effect to comprehensive reforms, in all parts of the Roman world, and to reduce both popular and military license under the firm restraints of law. None of his immediate successors had the same energy of character, the same mastery over the minds of the soldiers, or the same sagacity to devise enlightened reforms, and the readiest methods of their accomplishment, that Julius Cæsar possessed. Nor could any hand but his have given to the Roman state, under the change of its form, now apparently inevitable, that arrangement and all-pervading system of administrative rule and subordination, which were needed to unite stability and order with a fair amount of civil freedom. His usurpation, however, was justly resented as an unpardonable crime against his country; and it was after no long interval barbarously avenged. He perished by the daggers of Roman patriots in the senate, on the Ides of March, 44 B C, after having been dictator of Rome for about four years. Contests and wars followed; first, between Mark Antony and Octavianus, and the party headed by Brutus, Cassius, and others; and, after the defeat of the latter, in the celebrated battles near Philippi, then, between Antony and Octavianus, which resulted in the defeat of the former, in the great naval battle fought off the Cape of Actium. In the ten years' interval of these two wars, and during the period



of Mark Antony's power as the associate of Octavianus, the most horrible proscriptions were enacted at Rome, in which her most illustrious statesmen and citizens were given up to the daggers of assassins. Among these fell Cicero, the truest and most enlightened friend of his country, as he was the most eminent of Roman philosophers and orators. He perished in 43 B.C., at the age of sixty-three, leaving a name in eloquence second only to the great Athenian orator and statesman, who, in a similar crisis of the fall and troubles of his country, perished at nearly the same age, in the little island of Calauria. Mark Antony, after his defeat at Actium, followed Cleopatra in her flight to Egypt; and, in the following year, on hearing of the approach of the Roman victor to Alexandria, he put an end to his own life. Soon after, Cleopatra, the last descendant of the Ptolemies, ended her life in the same manner. Octavianus was now left undisputed master of the Roman world; even Egypt, the last and richest of the acquisitions of Rome, falling without a struggle under his absolute rule. He returned soon after to Italy; and, avoiding his uncle's fatal error, of wishing to assume the regal title, which, at the expulsion of Tarquin, had been abolished nearly five centuries before, he assumed imperial state and authority, in which his sole will was law throughout the empire, while maintaining the dignity of the senate, and all the ancient and venerated forms of the Roman republic.

Having brought down the review of Roman conquests and rulers to this point, it is necessary to resume the account of the Jewish state, which was broken off at the accession of Herod; and the explanation of the policy pursued by this tyrant will now be more easily understood, and can be more briefly given, after the reader has had placed before him, the greater changes in the Roman state, on which the movements of Herod were wholly dependent. That policy was to flatter, to gratify with munificent presents, and to side boldly with, whichever of the contending Roman generals held command nearest to Syria, and possessed therefore the most immediate opportunity of interfering in the affairs of Palestine. To gain the sovereignty in opposition to Aristobulus, and by usurpation over his older brother, the aged Hyrcanus, he flattered Pompey, and was unsparing in presents to his officers. After the defeat of Pompey, and when Mark Antony held rule over the eastern division of the Roman

republic, and resided at Alexandria, the politic ruler of Judea paid court to the paramour of Cleopatra, and to the Egyptian queen herself, with the same profuse munificence and professions of allegiance. In the contest of Antony with Octavianus, he even professed his readiness to assist Antony with his own troops; but, meanwhile, craftily evaded this engagement, by undertaking a war against Malchus, king of Arabia, in compliance with the pretended wish of Cleopatra.

The death of Antony, and the known zeal of Herod on his side, seemed to place the Jewish king in extreme peril. But his boldness and sagacity did not desert him in this conjuncture. Herod, after the battle of Actium, went with his fleet to meet the victor, and avowing frankly his previous zeal and friendship for Antony, offered to devote himself with equal zeal to the service of Octavianus, or, otherwise, to submit himself and his kingdom to the Roman general's disposal. Herod was not mistaken in thus calculating on the success of frank, yet respectful, bearing towards the nephew of Cæsar. He was received by the latter with expressions of regard and confidence, and was confirmed in all the power he had previously attained, with the addition of the title of King of Judea, and an *exemption from all tribute*. This was an indulgence of rare occurrence, and it supplied a circumstance of critical import in the history of our Lord's nativity, at the distance of near thirty years after the period of Herod's full accession to the Jewish throne. Herod again met Octavianus on his return from Egypt, and made him a present of 800 talents, receiving from the conqueror the territory of Gadara and Samaria, and the maritime towns of Joppa, Anthedon, Gaza, and the tower of Strato, where, ten years later, he built the noble city of Cæsarea, so named, in honour of his great friend and patron.

Some few words must be added, in recital of the incidents of Herod's measures at home. Bold, frank, and munificent, as was his general conduct towards those who held his doom in their power, whether Pompey, Antony, Cleopatra, or Augustus; at home, Herod was the bloody-minded tyrant, who made no scruple of sacrificing life, not only to his ambition, but to his caprice and suspicion, sparing not even those of his own family, and filling his palace with gloom, and his own breast with the furies. Thus, he caused the massacre of the Sanhedrim; after that, the murder of Hyrcanus, and of Aristobulus the youthful

Asmonean prince; then, of Mariamne his passionately-loved queen, and sister of the former; then, of his own sons by Mariamne, and finally, of his eldest son by a previous wife. Yet in the midst of these domestic crimes and disasters, the kingdom of Judea, under Herod, increased rapidly in strength and riches. He died in the year after the nativity of our Lord, having ruthlessly avenged his suspicions in the massacre of infants in and around Bethlehem. After some delay, Archelaus obtained the kingdom of Judea, but was soon deposed, and summoned to Rome, on account of his misrule and cruelty; and Roman governors, ending, as far as our present review proceeds, with Pilate, took the government of Judea. This arrangement continued through the reign of Tiberius Cæsar; but on the accession of Claudius, Herod Agrippa, a grandson of Mariamne, the Asmonean princess, regained the sceptre. He soon after died a miserable death at Cæsarea, and the kingdom relapsed under the administration of Roman Procurators, whose extortions, cruelties, and insults at last provoked the insurrection, which ended in the fall of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jewish people, to wander in all lands, for near twenty centuries, to the present moment.

We have, now, brought down our review of the acquisitions of the Roman empire to that era of time, at which its extension was completed, and the republic changed permanently into an imperial government, if not despotism, under the nephew of Julius Cæsar, Octavianus, from this time styled, by a decree of the senate, Augustus Cæsar. With the exception of the conquests made by Trajan about a century later, of Dacia, a province north of the Danube, and of the Parthian dominions as far as the Tigris, the vast aggression of the Roman empire had attained its final limits, and those limits included the richest portions of the civilized world. We may add also, in the time of Augustus, the singular exception of the British Isles, as being not included, up to this date, under the rule of that power, which had subdued every other country in the west of Europe. This island had been twice invaded by Julius Cæsar, in 55 and 54 B.C.; and, although Cæsar, in the second invasion, had advanced as far as the Thames, he made no permanent settlement for the Roman state in the island; and a hundred years were to elapse, before the Roman standards again gleamed on the beach of the British shore. But this exception, interesting as a fact in our own

history, was one of small account, in derogation from the extent or the completeness of that one empire, which now was constituted, by the permission of an overruling Providence, as the bond and unity of mankind, in its chief civilized portions, and which stretched from the Atlantic to the Euphrates. Britain was a country unknown, divided from all the rest of the world—*toto divisos orbe Britannos*—and deemed little capable of adding to the resources, as it no way interfered with the peace, or power, of the great world-empire on the Tiber.

When, after the battle of Actium, and the subsequent reduction of Egypt to a province, Augustus had become the master of the world, he applied himself earnestly to the consolidation of the empire, by encouraging the settlement of Roman colonies in every conquered territory, by the vigorous enforcement of Roman regulations, and by the gradual extension of the laws and usages of the Roman state to every foreign people brought under its control. Thus a progressive and rapid reduction took place of every independent institution in such states, and an assimilation, with the like pace, proceeded, of all ancient kingdoms under one order and form of organization, and administrative laws; so that the vestiges of the past were speedily disappearing, and the image of a single great empire, of which the distant provinces and nations were banded as firmly as were the once separate provinces of Italy or Gaul, was the spectacle presented towards the end of Augustus' reign, in the time of that unlooked-for and strange calm and peace of the whole world, which preceded the advent of Messiah, and the inauguration of the fifth and final empire of the world.

To conceive adequately, or at least with some approach to an intelligent and discriminating estimate, of the character and extent of that change which was effected on the condition of the world, by the conquests and the complete establishment of the Roman empire, it will be necessary only to bear in mind, first, the steps of preceding advance in political organization, power, and civilization, achieved by the *previous* great empires of the ancient world; and then, in the next place, to mark, specifically, the circumstances of vastly greater advance in the same direction, attained in the consummation of the Roman dominion, and the singular conditions of preparation for the times of the Christian dispensation, thus realized, by the rule which we have seen

advancing, through the struggles and wars of seven centuries, from the possession of a small territory on the Tiber, to the mastery of the whole civilized world.

Reserving to a subsequent page any remarks on the effect of Roman dominion on the advance of civilization generally, we will proceed at once to the more important question—What conditions, favourable to the promulgation of Christianity, were attained by the spread of Roman power, that existed not under the empire of Alexander, or during the monarchies of his successors? And it may be replied, generally, that, as compared with the result of the Greek conquest, some of these conditions were the following—the wider extension of empire in Europe and Africa—the more perfect and absolute assimilation of nations under the Roman administration, and their subjection as provinces of a single empire—and the freer and more perfect intercourse and transit, between all parts of the empire, with one another, and with their common centre in Italy, which subjected every province and corner of the empire to the surveillance of the Roman state, and offered a facility, impossible before, for the diffusion of the Christian faith, whenever the moment for its promulgation should arrive. We must offer a few observations in illustration of each of these consequences of the Roman conquest; after which their bearing on the publicity and diffusion of Christianity can be traced in a more specific manner.

The extension of Roman dominion, from its insignificant origin to its final limit, north, and south, and eastward, has been already described in the early part of this chapter; not with the minuteness or order of history, nor even in formal summaries of events; but the attempt has been to set it forth in its greater expansions, after the subjugation of Italy to Rome about 226 B.C., towards Africa, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt; in the chief occasions which led to each advance, and the critical contests on which the great result in each case depended. The *addition* brought by the Roman conquests to the former empire of Alexander lay, on the European side, in the great western portions of it, now crowded with population, in Italy, Sicily, Spain, Gaul, Pannonia, and Illyricum; and, on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean, in the accession of northern Africa, in one continuous broad margin of once discovered but powerful states, from the rocks of Mauritania to the shores of the Red Sea. Further, in Asia, the line of Roman do-

minion extended through the centre of Arabia Felix, and round by the Euphrates to Armenia and the sources of the Tigris, and encompassed all the states washed on the south by the Euxine, till it reached the Bosphorus, and, advancing along the base of Mount Hæmus, and through Pannonia, again rested on the Rhine. Compared with the former range of Alexander's conquests, we mark, in this survey, the omission of the territory beyond the Euphrates, or rather the Tigris; but it may be said, that, although the Roman authority, strictly speaking, was not, at the date now contemplated, asserted beyond these rivers, yet no *rival* state of any consequence had arisen to replace the kingdom of the Seleucidæ at Babylon; and the Parthian power, which had recently been stretched in that direction, had been utterly broken in the last campaign of Pompey; so that the Roman authority was dreaded even to the furthest east. Still, the strict limit rested on the Euphrates, and the countries towards the Indus were not comprehended under its rule; but against this we have to set the whole of western Europe south of the Danube, and the fact of the far harder, and more enterprising character of the populations spread over these countries. Hence with these, and the addition of Mauritania, Numidia, ancient Carthage, and all the countries thence onward to the Nile, the empire of Rome far surpassed in real greatness and power, and perhaps even in extent, the third empire of the world. But its power can be appreciated fully, only by considering the absolute and stern character of Roman rule, and the all-pervading activity and vigour of its administration.

The power of a great empire is to be not only considered *extensively* in the range of its authority; it requires to be computed also *intensively*, if we may so speak, in the degree in which that authority pervades, regulates, commands, and moulds society by its laws and arrangements. And it is in this especial view that the Roman empire became, in a manner, a new thing in the world, exerted a new power in the life of nations, effected an entire change in the political condition of all the kingdoms under its fasces, and stamped all this change with an endurance, which lasted for a thousand years, and the traces of which survive, in the great fragments of Roman empire, to the very hour we live in.

The conquests of Alexander effected much in the extension of Greek dominion, and still more in the spread of Greek civilization and literature. But the unity of the Macedonian empire subsisted

only till the hand that formed it grew chill in death. It broke into great masses, yet these masses still under the dominion of Greek generals, now independent sovereigns, at Babylon or Antioch, at Alexandria, at Pergamus, and at Pella the ancient capital of the kings of Macedon. These kingdoms were in perpetual collision and strife, till the stern approach of the Roman armies silenced their contests, and abolished their rule and name. But mark how different the aspect of these same states, *after* the establishment of the *Roman* power, and not only these, but all the kingdoms thus reduced under its sway. Every ancient authority is abolished and almost forgotten; every aspiration after independence is extinct; the separate nationalities of the east, the south, and the west, have been merged, and have coalesced into the uniformity of one great political organization, with its peoples only locally distinguished, or by their languages, and all become, not only passive to Roman law, but proud of their rank as provinces in the single great empire of the world. It is true, they were left in possession of ancient usages and customs in religion, and of much of their national laws; but nothing of *authority* was left, that militated with the imperial power, and nothing of ancient *law*, that stood in the way of a rigid and uniform Roman administration. Not that this perfect result was immediately attained in every country; but to this limit every movement tended; and this limit is seen realized, in its completest form, at the moment when our Lord appeared, a youth in the temple, holding conference with the Jewish doctors; a date only about three years after the deposition of Archelaus, and the passing away of the sceptre, and of the last ensign of independence, from the Jewish people. The whole aspect of the nations is changed. Instead of kingdoms, we meet with communities; instead of kings of ancient descent, and their courts, officials, and armies, we meet with Roman officers, proconsuls, and prefects, and all the forms of authority and law, which were to be seen in the towns of Italy. The judicial courts in Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Cyprus, or Athens, announce the same supreme power, defer to the same imperial regulations, and execute the same universal decrees. A single decree publishes a universal taxation, a single character is recognised on every coin, and a single privilege is potent and paramount above every other, that of being a Roman citizen. Is not this a *new* political order of

the nations, in a manner a new social creation, and an identity of submission, law, allegiance, passed, like fate, over the spirit of the nations of the world? These nations are no longer *named* as *such*, at least in any rank of honour, except it were, perhaps, the Greek, and all have subsided, mingled, and coalesced, into the variegated, but firmly-cemented mosaic, of the one Roman empire.

It was an immediate and inevitable consequence of this absolute character, presence, and pervasion of Roman administration, that the nations of the world, those of the east and the west, of Gaul and of Africa, should become united not merely by a common relation to the same dread authority, but become united to Rome, and with one another, in the constancy of transit and traffic by sea and by land. The fleet of Pompey, in the year before his great campaign in the last Mithridatic war, had swept the sea clear of pirates, and the Roman surveillance was such, that a peaceful raft might cross from island to island, and cape to cape, in perfect security. There was the like security, in general, to the traveller on land. And the reason of all was, that Roman power compassed the seas; and pirates could make for no harbour where their crimes would not meet with prompt vengeance from the hand of a Roman lictor. Hence, what with the crossing and recrossing of Roman fleets and detachments of soldiers, the crowded convoys of merchant craft, bearing the riches of the east, of the Indies, and of Arabia, to the vortex of the great capital, and the incessant voyages of deputations from the provinces, to gain redress to grievances, or arbitration to their own disputes, before the Roman senate; Rome became, as was inevitable, the great centre of attraction to adventurers, from the east or south, in commerce; and we find, accordingly, that numbers of Egyptians, and a small colony even of Jews, had, in the last years of Augustus, and long before the visit of the great Christian apostle, found Rome a place for enterprise and intrigue. And not only so; even in all the intermediate great cities, the same evidence of the freer intercourse of nations, once unknown to each other, became apparent. The Jews were not the only people who availed themselves of safe transit by land or by water, or of secure residence under the one common supreme power, in any and every city to which curiosity or commerce tempted their wanderings. And the historical notices we have, by means of the narrative of Luke



the Evangelist, regarding their residence in the chief cities of Asia and Europe, are an evidence of the like or greater intercommunity and intercourse, between the individuals of nations, not so separate and unsocial, as the Jewish race, in every hour of its existence, has remained. There were Jews, as we learn, in Alexandria, in the interior towns of Asia Minor, Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra; but there were Jews also at Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, and Rome; and, in fact, in every town, whither the apostles brought the message of the cross. And, as there were traffickers of this race, it is not to be doubted, that of every considerable people there would be residents and sojourners, in other countries than their own. The fact of universal and safe transit is thus fully ascertained, as the *result of Roman dominion*; and it is a wholly *new* condition of things in ancient history; one never till this period realized. To what ends, in the purposes of Divine Providence, this condition became available, and how it was an indispensable one to the fulfilment of these purposes, will immediately become apparent.

There is one circumstance more to be mentioned, or rather one grand condition of human affairs, attained, in great degree, by the prevalence and final success of Roman conquest, and the full establishment of Roman power throughout the whole extent of the civilized world; and that is, the *universal peace* which, a short time before the advent of Messiah, had been realized from end to end of the Roman dominions, and, in fact, throughout the whole world then known. The conflicts of the advancing empire with the nations were ended by their subjugation and entire submission; the conflicts of separate nations among themselves, were repressed and forbidden by dread of the imperial power, and the vigilant observation of Roman armies and colonies posted in different regions of the empire. The contests of rival factions in Italy were also now closed, and all ranks and parties acquiesced in the imperial rule of Augustus; glad to exchange popular freedom for repose and private security. There was peace in Gaul, now pervaded by Italian civilization, to the banks of the Rhine, and even among German tribes across its torrent. Spain, Sicily, and Africa, after the contests and bloodshed of centuries, were now quelled in un murmuring submission, and devoted to a new career of industry and commerce. Greece, with her once separate states, but now a single great province, flourished anew in her schools and enter-

prise; and, caring scarcely to retain remembrance of her former independence, had also ceased from her former home jealousies and contests, and was employed in casting the subtle influences of her nobler arts and philosophy on the spirits of her Roman masters.

Peace reigned also in Asia, to the extreme of the Parthian kingdom; and the like peace in Palestine, Arabia, Egypt, and Nubia, to the furthest line of even the explorations of travellers. Thus, a universal calm and repose had stilled the nations; the hush of a deep and unlooked-for peacefulness brooded over the earth, and filled the thoughts of men with a strange wondering, and undefined expectation. The noblest poets of the Latin race, and of the Augustan age, Virgil and Horace, sang of the holy calm and peace of their time, as the auspicious result of the successes given to the imperial arms; and, with no presaging thought of the character of the new era that was to open on the world, almost in the moment when they should depart from the scene, they augured the coming of still brighter ages, as ensuing under the successive reigns of the Julian family. Mournfully unconscious of the providential rule of the One Supreme, and snatched from time, only a few years before the revelations of heavenly truth reached the city on the Tiber, and penetrated the palace of the Cæsars, these gifted spirits flattered that future which they were not to see, with omens of brightness and splendour, fulfilled in far higher meaning and manner than their sublimest anticipations could give hint of.

But, at least, *this was* the aspect of the world's condition, which prompted their song, and inspired them with new visions. The world was at rest through all its borders, and that, not so much, now, in terror or misery, but in calm, final acquiescence under one rule, and satisfaction to share a perfect protection and security from near and old rivals and enemies. And the *novelty* of this state of the world struck the thoughts of men, as much as its benign character and felicity. It had never been attained before on any such scale, approaching to universality, as was now presented, about the middle of the reign of Augustus, and on the eve of Messiah's advent. From the beginning of history, the existence of nations had been a strife. War had had few intermissions, in some point or other of the civilized world, to say nothing of the strife of barbarian nations; but, if quelled in one

direction, it blazed forth at many points more fiercely in others ; and, in a word, from the very age after the Deluge, there perhaps was never a single moment, in which contests and bloodshed were not proceeding in some quarter or other, and oftenest in many quarters at once. The extension of empire was effected through wars ; but *being effected*, it enlarged the circle of *internal peace and security* ; and the work of warfare would proceed only on the frontiers of the now widened domain of empire. Then again, the rise of a rival power brought on a new succession of struggles ; and the earth was covered with a more multitudinous array of combatants. Thus, age after age witnessed its wars and revolutions ; and the review of ancient empires, in which we have been engaged, has only revealed a succession of deadliest struggles, issuing in the formation of wider kingdoms, but never giving security, or even hope of rest, to the tempest-tossed fortunes of humanity. But, on a sudden, after the final victories of Augustus, and the successful campaigns of Drusus, on the Rhine, peace was ratified throughout the nations, and the whole earth was at rest. Not a legion of the Roman army but was resting in encampment, in Gaul, Parthia, Egypt, or Numidia ; not a people in the south, the east, or beyond the Alps, gave disquietude, or showed symptoms of discontent ; and though, in many quarters, oppressed by Roman governors, the thought of questioning the rule of Rome had almost departed from men's hearts ; and they sought rather to cultivate its favour, and share its privileges. What a strange and new condition of things was this, and how appropriate, as the hushed silence and preparation of the earth, for the coming of the Desire of nations ! And can it be a doubt with any one who is a believer in the overruling designs of Divine Providence, much less in the explicit announcements of revelation, that such a state of the nations was one great result predestinated in the Divine counsels, in *permitting* the unresisted extension and deep-rooted establishment of the last single empire in the world ?

Before we give ourselves to the theme of the manifestation of Christianity to the world, there are remarks we wish to make, of a somewhat different import from the general strain of our observations hitherto, on the successive steps of advance gained or effected, in the world's civilization and tendency to unity, by the several empires which preceded the dawn of Christianity.

Such remarks might have been offered somewhat earlier ; but we think them most fitly reserved for this place, when the *utmost result* and advantage of the world's preparation, through the instrumentality of Persia, Greece, or Rome, have been set forth by us, and that in terms guarded, as far as we could, from excess and exaggeration. Yet their effect may have seemed that of a *one-sided* representation of things ; and the reader may have been tempted, occasionally, in following the statements given of the bright diffusion of Greek intelligence, and the peaceful unity of Roman rule, to feel as if a condition of the world was attained, which needed scarcely any change for the better, but the continuance, or gradual improvement only, on that career of advance in peace, arts, commerce, and literature, of which Virgil and Horace could have been the best and worthiest bards and prophets. We wish to arrest any such tendencies of contemplation, or inference ; we wish to pause at this most hopeful state the world ever hitherto had reached, at least for its peace and intercommunity, and to direct the reader's thoughts, for a while, to the awful depth of the world's *moral* need and misery, at the brightest point of its ancient intelligence, and the happiest era of its political and social repose. The review of this part of the case need not detain us long from the dawn of the Christian age ; but it is indispensable that it should be made, in order that the exact estimate of the world's condition under its last empire may be formed, and that its exigences, in its utter despair and darkness, may prepare us to judge aright of the glory of that rising, which shed light and healing on the nations.

It was natural, or rather it was inevitable, that we should describe, in the manner we have, the circumstances of a more advanced condition in the world's history, consequent upon the formation of its great empires. Our proper object being, *chiefly*, to detect and display any *changes for the better*, which would be of the nature of a growing preparation for the introduction of the Christian era, attention was directed somewhat exclusively to *these*, as progressive results, which would illustrate some one comprehensive design of Providence, in permitting empire after empire to be formed, each on a wider basis than the preceding, and each exhibiting conditions of increasing preparation for the time of the Redeemer's coming. The question, therefore,

as regards these, is, whether such changes and results, of a higher preparation, through the progress of ages from the Deluge downwards, are truly alleged ; in other words, —were they real ? *were* there such results ? and *had* they the tendency ascribed to them, to ensure a more fitting and advantageous state of things, when the moment should arrive for the promulgation of a new faith to all nations ? If so, and this fact shall be more specifically demonstrated very soon, then it is a service rendered to the exposition of history, and the illustration of the paramount reign of Providence, to set forth such results in their fullest amount, and most impressive form. But such illustration, given alone, of the advantageous changes effected by ancient empires, would necessarily wear the appearance of paradox and exaggeration, unless it be borne in mind, that our view, for the time, was purposely *confined* to this aspect, of the influence of such mighty dominions. To *complete* the picture of their effect, in their own, and perhaps in after ages, there would be required the enumeration of the wrongs, the cruelties, the slavery, the infinite misery entailed by wars of conquest ; and the specific counterbalance to this view is, that such general wars terminated that condition of internecine strife, which inflicted a still more all-pervading calamity on society, in tribes, or in smaller states, anterior to the subduing conquests of greater powers. Let these remarks suffice, with respect to the full admission of the infinite social evils, attendant on the rise and advance of ancient empires to the mastery of the world.

But further, it was inevitable to exhibit, as we have attempted to do, the advantages evolved in the succession of empires, not simply in their nature, but in full strength of statement as to their amount, as far as facts would allow ; so as to impress the fact of their real existence, and permanent influence on the condition of nations, till the consummation of the times appointed for the commencement of a new and wholly different dominion. Thus, we have asserted, that the Greek conquest spread the light of a higher intelligence throughout Asia ; and that, as a consequence, the human mind, by the action of Greek culture and literature, was raised inconceivably above that uncivilized condition, which Asia and Europe would have exhibited, in the times of the Babylonian power, or even of Cyrus' reign. This illumination, introduced in the train of Alexander's victories into the east, and

in Egypt, was permanent, and of continually advancing influence over the nations; and it created a condition of incalculable advantage and value, we again repeat, as a preparation and an elevating of the human intellect, for meeting the doctrines of a spiritual religion—a religion of revealed truth, and not of sensible rites—with more discerning apprehension, if not with readier faith. There was intelligence, there was culture of the intellect, there was an awakening of thought, there was the intense curiosity after truth, or what might seem to be such, in Asia, as well as in Greece, attained before the Christian era; and these aspirations of the kindled spirit of man, were fed and delighted by the stores of a literature which has yet no equal, in the perfection of its language, in the subtlety of its speculation, or in the sublimity of its poetic creations. They were the pages of *Æschylus*, of *Homer* and *Plato*, of *Lysias* and *Demosthenes*, with the authorship of a hundred others, whose works may have perished, which were unfolded to the meditative gaze of youths in the schools of Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt; and with which even many Jewish students, such as *Philo* at Alexandria, *Saul* at Tarsus, and probably *Timothy* at Derbe, became fondly familiar.

With the continuance and spread of this intellectual illumination, which the succeeding Roman conquest did not disturb but encourage; with the unity and peace of nations, at last attained through the sole instrumentality of that conquest; with the flourishing of commerce, art, and all the pursuits of industry, consequent upon the repose and security bestowed by the Roman power to the whole world;—it may be asked, What elements were wanting to its happiness and tranquillity; what, of difference or inferiority, could be discerned in that age, at the acme of Greek and Roman civilization, in Europe, for example, compared with the condition of humanity in Europe now; and what circumstances would entitle a religiously taught youth in our own day, to regard with mournful compassion such minds as those of *Horace*, or *Virgil*, or *Cicero*, who exhibited, in the generation immediately preceding the Christian era, the last perfected results of Greek or Roman culture, in beauty of thought, or in reach of philosophy?

The question, as thus put, will force the reader's thoughts on a train of reflections, never more needful than when we have given ourselves, as may often be the case, to the unreserved admiration

of the authors of Greece and Rome, and are tempted to fall in with the illusion, that the times of such bright intellectual achievement, were times of wide-spread certainty on all themes, and of heartfelt happiness in all who shared its splendour. Alas! it was not so.

Co-existent with Greek speculation, argument, and poetry, and with the general spread of Greek literature and art, was the continuance, and even the aggravated prevalence in outward observances, of the huge, black, monstrous system of *idolatry*, in all its varied and debasing imaginations, fixing and instilling its imposture on human eyes and human faculties, and filling the mental sphere inwards with darkest, with most horrid, with most perplexing fancies. Thus, while a clear apprehension could be directed on questions of secular science, and the touching aspects of human life; on the infinitely greater questions, of man's relation to some superior Being, and to an after state, there was the pressure on man's view, the brooding presence, of a lie, or of thick darkness and fearful foreboding. Not only in Egypt, amidst the grandeur of its ancient remains, not only in Babylon, or in the barbarous towns of Phrygia, were the monstrous lies of idolatry sincerely believed, and its horrid practices observed as the duties of a religion worthy of man; but at Ephesus, at Athens, at Corinth, in Plato and Xenophon's times, as before and after, and at the world's mighty capital, Rome itself, down to the age when Augustus reigned, and the very moment when Horace and Virgil died, as well as much later, there was, in co-existence with philosophy, oratory, and art the most resplendent, the same general faith in idolatry in its basest forms, and the same infatuated scrupulosity in respect of its meanest observances. Or, if the belief of any were weakened, or for a moment perplexed, it was only to be succeeded by total doubt as to all divinities, or by a more desperate relapse, after many questionings, into the monstrous illusions transmitted from a long-past age. And there was no surmounting the barrier of darkness and illusion which surrounded them. The penetration of Cicero was nearly as helpless, as the conjecture of the rudest of his fellow-citizens. His thoughts often went forth into the universe around him, or speculated eagerly on the traditions and philosophy of preceding times; but without avail. He could grasp no solution of man's destiny. He formed high and beautiful imaginations of a future

gathering of the spirits of the just ; but they were imaginations merely, or nearly such, held with no conviction, and fruitful practically, in his last disappointments and perils, of no solace, and no hope.

This, then, was the furthest point to which the human mind attained, considered as a fact in history, down to the very reign of the world's sole monarch, and touching upon the very hour of the coming of Messiah, the Lord of glory in the nature of man. This was the utmost the human faculties could accomplish, in the most profound and disciplined intellect of the times of Roman greatness. We have selected Cicero, because he formally and earnestly gave his thoughts to these subjects. As to the other names referred to, Virgil and Horace, selected also as the most brilliant types of their own age, extending some years later than the period of the cruel death of Rome's best statesman and orator—these poets glanced thoughtfully to the same problems of a Divinity, and an after state ; the one with serious feeling, the other with reckless levity and ultimate unbelief ; and both expired in the thick darkness of doubt, if not of fearful apprehension. In the same profound ignorance, in the same forced levity of thought, or in the same forebodings springing from the consciousness of guilt, expired the gay and shrewd Mæcenas, and the calculating and sagacious Augustus himself on the throne of the world. And the picture of their consciousness may be transferred, but charged with deeper, denser darkness and infatuation, to the populace, in all nations—to the mass, in fact, of mankind, throughout the whole civilized world ; to say nothing of the foul imaginations and practices of barbaric nations.

Not only were idolatries the most debasing, falsehoods the most confounding—thus rife, triumphant, and all-prevalent—perpetuated in their impregnable power, down to the most advanced age of the world's merely philosophic and secular culture ; but there remained, in conjunction with such beliefs and rites, and in spite of their pretensions and promises, the unabated sense of guilt, dismay, and foreboding in the human heart, and this through the whole extent of the pagan world. There was wide-spread desolation and misery, and there was no hope for the dying, and no solace for survivors. There was still the dark, insurmountable limit, compassing human thought on all sides, and repelling its attempts to know more, in all directions ; and



there was, besides, the deep despair of personal consciousness, under unexpiated guilt.

This is but a faint picture of the mental and moral condition of the world, before the advent of Messiah; and it has been dwelt upon, (though not at a length commensurate with its extent and many relations,) because, so familiar are the minds of all men, now, in Christian countries, with the simple daylight of revelation, that few can realize, without earnest thought, something of the very *condition of the human mind*, in the age of Roman conquest, so as to picture to themselves the *consciousness* of mankind in that period, whether in passive, profound ignorance, in hopeless speculation, in reckless defiance, or in deep fearfulness and horror.

Other illustrations of the world's deep and hopeless exigence and misery, it were easy to adduce; but we are reminded of the necessity of hastening forward our review to a conclusion; and the illustrations given, based as they are on the history and literature of the Roman times, will suffice to show, that, with all the advantageous conditions, such as we have described, of the world's advance, they are conditions of advance only in one limited direction, that of a state of things preparatory to the promulgation of Christianity, and more favourable to its attestation and spread, than the stages of an earlier history. There was wide-spreading intelligence; but its light broke short on the confines of eternity. There was beautiful speculation; but, unprovided with the elements of Divine truth, it ended in no inference which could disclose man's condition the moment after he should expire. There was poetry, of sublimest force and fancy; but it pictured only the scenes of time, and had no voice for the praise of the Creator, for it knew not of such. There was oratory, which inflamed with invincible purpose whoever listened to it; but its theme and scope told only of the defence of liberty, and of homes; with no gleam of thought, glancing furtherwards to the objects and interests of the invisible world, and no hint of such themes, as three centuries later than the utterance of the burning words of Demosthenes, were propounded on the same spot, and in the same language, by the young scholar of Tarsus, now a missionary of the cross. In a word, comparing even the loftiest reasonings of Plato—whose speculations *did* seek to overpass the boundaries of time, and to cast light on questions relating to a hereafter—with the sublime

discourse of St Paul on Mars' Hill, and estimating them by their thoughts alone, and by the whole manner of thought exhibited in each, the contrast seems so vast, the remoteness and dimness of the field of view, as offered to the one, so unlike the confident, clear, and near vision of the eternal world, open to the other, that we might be almost tempted to pronounce them intelligences of different ranks in the creation; the one, the acutest and loftiest that, perhaps, ever adorned the theatre of time, the other, seeming, from his absolute heaven-taught utterances, like one who belonged to a higher sphere.

But let us hasten to the great event, which gave to the latter his unearthly discoveries, and heart-touching persuasions; the event which changed, as by the radiance of the risen sun, the whole aspect of human knowledge, and human destiny, and changed the whole character and complexion of the world's history, so as to be a dividing limit between the past and all succeeding ages.

The world, at the point of time referred to, is politically, and in main degree socially, one; and, for one period, the first since the fall, strife is unheard, and the hush of a deep peace is brooding over the nations. Of these nations, one will now claim special regard; it is that peculiar race, which, in times distant as the date of the Pyramids of Ghizeh, or the statue of Memnon, was chosen by the Supreme Being, to bear his holy name, to testify his rule, to receive his oracles, to worship him by an inspired system of holy and significant rites, and to continue in the possession and observance of these, till the coming of the promised Deliverer unto the nations. This race, through all the long ages of its story, and all its perils, has survived to the time of Roman conquest, and maintains with scrupulous regard all the truths, and all the ordinances, committed to its ancestors 1600 years before. And the Roman conquest has enwrapped it in its circle, but not yet touched its independence, or broken the sceptre of its monarchy. Judea is a part of the Roman empire; and Roman regulation and law, without interfering with its national distinctness or religious rites, are potent in the cities of Palestine, as they are potent at the foot of the capitol. A slight, but critical result, of the sovereignty of the city of the Tiber over the east, was at the moment of which we are now to speak, to give a strange verification, wholly unthought of by the parties themselves influenced by the circumstance, to

words in Micah's prophecy, committed to record seven centuries before. A direction issues from the first Roman emperor that all the world should be taxed; and, whether at this time the tribute was to be exacted, or only the enrolment of the population to take place, in consequence of this behest, a Jewish peasant and his youthful wife, with perhaps others of their kindred, are on their way from the north of Palestine, to a small village some thirty miles south of Jerusalem. Here is a far-travelled consequence, if we may so speak, in history, tending to its coincidence with, or rather realization of prophecy. Annul the fact of Roman conquest, or even the supremacy and the very determinations of Augustus, and how should the birth of Jesus take place at Bethlehem? Yet here it must take place, and in no other city on the world's surface; and, in accordance with this destiny, but moved solely by the decree of Augustus Cæsar, Joseph and Mary are on their way to Bethlehem, and reach its public caravansary perhaps late in the evening, that on the morrow their names, as belonging by their families to this locality, might be enrolled in the register of the Roman empire. "And it came to pass that while they were there," was born the Child, whose goings forth were from everlasting; whose name was Immanuel, the Christ; that name which was afterward stamped on the faith and profession of the whole Roman empire; that name which gives to the civilized world, this day, all its glory, and all its solace and hope. This, then, was one apparently slight, but real, and singularly critical consequence, of the establishment of the fourth empire of Daniel's vision.

Thus in the calm of nations, while the universe seemed to pause and rest on its centre, when human affairs wore the aspect of the untroubled deep, when no breath passes over its surface, at this moment rose the "day-spring from on high," which poured its light on the nations, and brought life and healing in its wings.

To this event, if we view human events through the medium of revelation, all the anterior great changes of time were to tend in some way of preparation—at least, more or less directly, were to be made subservient. And we shall proceed to show, that it was on the establishment of the Roman empire, many subsequent incidents of our Lord's history depended for their verification as prophecy; that on its establishment the clear attestations of his death and resurrection depended; that on its sovereignty,

the full and satisfactory publicity of his miracles and teachings depended; that Roman absolute rule, not only levelled the nations and gave to the missionaries of the cross a safe and universal transit to every part of the world, but was the paramount and sole influence, which secured access to the message of Christianity among the nations, and saved it from a contest for utterance with every separate nation to which it came; and in a word, that it was the power of Rome, lofty in its security, and indifference to the teachings of a contemptible Jewish sect, which for years gave protection to its messengers in all lands, and ensured it, without any such design, a full and free utterance through the whole world, before any suspicion arose of the necessity of checking the faith of the name of Jesus.

The first grand condition, in relation to the origin of Christianity, obtained by the establishment of the Roman empire over the east, and the existence of an absolute and vigilant Roman administration in Palestine, was the general security gained for the full discharge of our Lord's public teachings and ministry, whose life else had fallen an early sacrifice to the malignity of the Jewish rulers and zealots. We have already noticed the prophetic fulfilment, determining the event of his birth to a particular locality, little anticipated or thought of by his virgin mother, under the compulsive decree of Augustus Cæsar, issued at that time. All events in our Lord's history were predestinated by higher counsels, some as simply permitted and foreknown, others as complacently ordained of his heavenly Father; and in many, a human instrumentality, sometimes very distant, is yet the sole agency concerned, as in the decree of Augustus, bringing each to take effect in its appointed time, place, and order. We shall pass over the whole period of our Lord's life in obscurity at Nazareth, since it was purposely secluded, and his history lay then out of the range of public events and transactions. But, the moment he came forth in his public character as the heavenly Teacher, as the revealer of a new kingdom and economy, in which the Mosaic should be absorbed and terminate, and as the expounder of the Divine law in its strict, spiritual import and requisitions, his position became a public and perilous one, and, humanly viewed, his ministry incurred the hazard of immediate arrest, and his life of a sudden and cruel end. And thus peril menaced the premature close of his career from two quarters, and only

from two; the vengeance of his own countrymen, the Jewish priests and rulers, whose hypocrisy he denounced, and whose ritual services he foretold should cease; and the jealousy and fear of the crafty Herod, who was Tetrarch of Galilee and Ituræa, the district where our Lord chiefly fulfilled his earlier ministrations.

The brief career and cruel death of the Baptist, the holy prophet, who prepared the way of the Lord, gave example how insecure was the life of any teacher, if within Herod's reach. Our Lord understood the warning in this light, and accordingly, on hearing of the death of John, moved westward into the territory bordering on ancient Tyre and Sidon. But whenever he came southward towards Judea, or took his place in the precincts of the temple at Jerusalem, and proclaimed his Divine mission, his safety was exposed to the other source of peril, the fierce resentment of the priesthood, and Jewish leaders; and time was, when not one day's delay would have intervened between his public appearance in the temple, and his being devoted to the death accorded to blasphemy, by being stoned, as the first of his martyrs was, some three years later, outside the city walls. But this time was past; and no such sudden and summary vengeance could now be permitted to cut short our Lord's ministry, before his hour, predestined in the counsels of eternity, should arrive, when his death should take place indeed, through Jewish malignity, but yet not after the manner of Jewish punishments, nor even by the hands of Jewish agents. What power, instrumentally, suspended his fate, and guarded his life, through the appointed years of his ministry and miracles? What prevented the very memory of Jesus from being suddenly extinguished? The sole, or at least the chief shield of his life, under Providence, was the Roman power. Had his ministry, instead of his birth, taken place in Herod's reign, thirty years earlier, just before that bloodthirsty monarch had ceased to reign and live, or again before the monarchy was taken from Archelaus, and a Roman governor had been substituted in place of an independent sovereign at Jerusalem, in all human probability, he would have been cut off on the first intelligence of his public teachings. Or, again, if in the actual period of his ministry, the dread of Roman power had not held his enemies, of the priesthood, in check, the same event had followed from their irre-

pressible and unscrupulous vengeance. They were enabled, at last, after many delays, and many disappointments and consultations, to compass their object, only by fabricating a *political* charge against Jesus of Nazareth, which forced the Roman governor to take cognizance of the alleged pretension, and at last alarmed him into consent for his death.

But, for the previous years of our Lord's teaching, in at least their chief proportion, the existence of a paramount Roman administration shielded his life from harm; and thus secured the continuance and complete development of his ministry, in his teachings and miracles, for the period pre-ordained for its perfection and close. How strange was this, that the dominion attained by the expansion of the small Latin state on the Tiber, till, through centuries of struggle, it reached its limit on the Euphrates, and included Judea under its absolute rule, and at the time we speak of, under its immediate administration—that this dominion, being at this date extant and paramount in the promised land over Abraham's descendants, should be the shield and security, under Providence, of the life and ministrations of that anointed Seed of Abraham, in whom all nations should be blessed, who was now at last come, and was soon to give himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world! Yet such was the reality of that relation, in which this fourth empire of the world now stood, in respect of the ministry of our Lord. Its power was the instrumentality which in the end took away his life; but that same power, alone, or at least chiefly, under God, shielded it from its ever impending fate, till the full unfolding and completion of its great purposes, anterior to the hour of its sacrificial immolation on the cross. The struggles of the republic, the wars with foreign nations, the conquests of Pompey, the last triumph of Augustus, were stages of advancing Roman power, which *led to this position*, and to the fulfilment of this appointed service, in the time of Messiah's teaching. The sermon on the mount, the baptism in the Jordan, the teachings around the lake of Tiberias, and, more strictly still, the discourses boldly propounded in the temple, in the very hearing of Jewish rulers, were ministered under the shadow of Roman rule. We shall presently have to consider the effect of the like security, given in a wider sense to the very promulgation of the Redeemer's message and doctrines after his death and ascension; but we

have first to direct the reader's attention to the peculiar relations of Roman power, to the event of his death, in the fulfilment of prophecy, and to the attestations of his resurrection, as occurring under conditions of vigilance, beyond the interference of his disciples, and beyond the denial of his foes.

The predictions gone forth in the ancient Divine oracles, some of them a thousand years before the event, others in after centuries, respecting our Lord's death, were many in number, various in their mode of reference, yet not contradictory; some glancing to one class of circumstances, and some to others; but when *comprehended in one summary*, the whole prediction, concentrated on this greatest event of all time, will be seen, if judged of beforehand, to include strangest particulars, and to adventure on peculiar intimations, apparently wholly impossible to be assembled in actual fulfilment. He was to fall a victim to the hatred of his own people, by whom he was despised and rejected, yet not to die by any manner of death provided by Jewish laws, or even allowed by Jewish usage, among the punishments assigned to those they condemned. His hands were to be pierced, his vesture to be divided, his last moments to be a protracted lingering of torture, in which his thirst was to find only the relief of vinegar mingled with gall. These, and perhaps some other hints of significant reference, were to meet in his sufferings; but absolutely no provision existed, in any circumstances or arrangements of solely Jewish origin, for effecting into reality any particle of these predictions. Had it been simply said, in the mournful allusions of Israel's monarch and bard, a thousand years previous, or in any later reference, even thirty, or twenty years before the event, that the rejected Messenger of Jehovah should be cast forth and stoned to death, the whole would have been perfectly intelligible, as a probability in the channel of Jewish history and usage. But how shall he die among Jews, and by their instigation, an accursed death, but die in a manner abhorrent from their law and custom, and a manner in which, as far as is known, no single Jew perished before, though thousands in such awful mode perished, some forty years later? The answer to this difficulty is now obvious enough; but we are not fully capable, after the event, of appreciating its utter improbability, if judged of in an anterior age. The destiny of Rome was on its march to meet

such difficulty in Palestine. Every advance of the Roman eagles—to Carthage, to Greece, to Parthia, and Syria—advanced the preparations for fulfilling the literal predictions of David. The establishment of the Roman power in Judea, gave its *formal distinction and character* to the message of Christianity, by determining the manner of its Founder's death. That message was to be the message of the Cross; a word now dear to myriad lips, and sounded in the myriad hymns of the church in time, and by the golden harps of the heavens at this hour; and the summary of Christian doctrine had to be cast, in virtue of the establishment of the Roman dominion, and by its cruel instrumentality, yet also in accordance with the Divine decree—had to be cast, in the following *formula*, as recited by the apostles to the Gentiles—that it was *the doctrine of Christ Crucified*. This character of our Lord's death became possible, only by a remote consequence of the Roman conquest; and thus, the whole type and form of Christianity, viewed in its sacrificial agony and origin, was, under God, a result attained through the centuries of Roman advance and power.

Doubtless, as such a form of suffering, as such a type of the great Sacrifice, was distinctly designed in the decrees of eternity, so it had been elected for some peculiar ends; one, and perhaps the chief of which, was, to embody the suffering of our blessed Lord, under the most abhorrent, and even accursed form of doom and stigma. Thus, besides giving forth an intenser emblem of the inward darkness which fell upon his spirit, as one "rejected of men, and stricken of God and afflicted," it was to incorporate the fullest amount of *associations of offence* to the apprehensions of men; in order that, if *such* doctrine should be received, and *such* a Saviour believed in, it might appear, it was the result of accompanying miracle in the first proclamations of this doctrine as attesting its divinity, as well as of the effective working of the Holy Spirit, which alone can gain in any human bosom a cordial reception for the claims of a *crucified* Redeemer, or an immovable trust in the *cross* of Christ. Hence, as a type of his accursed death for sinners, and as a test in the first age of the reality of his acceptance by disciples as Saviour, the *cross* bore his sacred form when he died, and he was fastened *there*, by the written sentence of a Roman governor.

Manifold were, in truth, the purposes designed by the counsels of



Heaven, in the fact of the particular mode of death, by which the Redeemer of mankind should die, whether as indicating the curse attaching to the penalty of human transgression, or as involving a protracted death and unspeakable agony, or lastly as affording that long space of time, in the very endurance of dying, during *all which*, the Divine Sufferer displayed a moral glory on the very cross, in his uncomplaining patience, forgiving love, and willingness in each instant to bear every agony that came upon him, that even surpassed the glory of his miraculous wonders. But whatever ends, of the character specified, were of unspeakable importance as necessary to be realized in the last scene of his dying, these became possible only by a *protracted death*, as compared with any instantaneous infliction, which would have suddenly ended the tragic scene. As it was, the dying of the Lord Jesus became of itself an unfolded scene of spiritual glory, as of agony, which surpassed all others enacted under the sun, and developed in a few hours a history, as of woes, so of Divine incidents and manifestations of patience and unquenchable love to a perishing world, that has imprinted the *memory and aspect of his death* in characters never to be effaced in human annals. And to the permitted spread of the Roman power, this mode of the Saviour's death, and the consequences of it referred to, were instrumentally due, in subservience of the counsels of Heaven; and the once detested image of the Cross now gleams, as the omen of peace and redemption, from the towers of innumerable sanctuaries throughout Christendom.

But if the verification of prophecy, and the manifestations, else impossible, of the Divine glory of the Saviour's character under suffering, and in protracted death, were thus fulfilled in his crucifixion by the sentence of the Roman governor, the ensuring the conditions of a perfect attestation to his *resurrection*, was a provision of not less moment; and it was attained through the existence of the Roman paramount rule in Judea. Had he fallen by the mere decree of a Jewish Sanhedrim, he would not have been crucified, but would have been stoned without the city walls. Had his mangled form, after his death, been surrendered to the disposal of the Jewish rulers, there would have existed, to after times, no certain and *independent* authority, with which to refute the story which they eagerly framed, as to his disciples having stolen the body. If again, it

had been committed without restriction to the keeping of the *latter*, the same indisputable reply to the allegations of the Jews would have been unattainable. The seal of the Roman empire, and the guard of Roman soldiers, took the whole event of the history of the resurrection, alike from the possible interference of friends, and the successful misrepresentations of enemies. It was the fond belief of Jewish rulers that the history of Jesus of Nazareth was at this point really concluded, and their fear that his disciples might attempt to conceal the body, and so give forth that it had become reanimated, that led to the singular request that Pilate should seal the tomb in the garden, and should put a guard there for its security. The imperial authority took charge of the silent sepulchre, where the lifeless form lay of the crucified Jesus. On the third day, angels were on the ground; the terror-stricken Roman soldiery had fled; the stone at the mouth of the tomb had been removed; and Christ had arisen from the dead. It is true, the Jews gave out the account that his disciples had stolen the body; but such attempt had been rendered impossible by the success of their own application to Pilate, and the story itself could win no regard or credit. And the same fact, of the impossibility of the interference of his disciples, or of the connivance of Roman authority with such attempt if made, ensures also *the same satisfaction to all times*, in this refutation of Jewish malignity. His disciples could not have gained possession of the corpse of the Saviour; and if either the Jewish rulers, or the Roman soldiers, or Pilate, had it still in their possession, why did they not produce it, and so have terminated and extinguished the story of the resurrection at its birth? On the contrary, their failing to do this, and the impossibility, because Roman power had the sepulchre in its charge, of the disciples interfering, had such a thought ever entered their minds, established the completeness, in this negative form of its construction, of the evidence of the Saviour's resurrection. Its positive forms of proof came afterwards, in our Lord's appearances to his disciples, and the miracles which followed their testimony; but the refutation of the story of the Jewish rulers, and of the whole hypothesis that the corpse of Jesus still existed as such, *was made absolute*, by the soul and the guard of the fourth empire of the ancient world.

Thus marvellous are the ways and appointments of Providence. God makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the pride of

empires to stoop to the service of Christianity. At this very moment, the influence tells, of the interposition of Pilate, in protecting the silence of the garden from the access of any but his own guard of soldiers; and the seal he caused to be imprinted on the tomb, destined to be broken only by angelic agency, was imprinted anew, in its inference and import, on the very evidence and proof of the resurrection of the Lord of glory.

We think it cannot be denied by any unprejudiced, and intelligent mind, that these peculiar and momentous circumstances, affecting the very origin, of Christianity, in, first, the security for the appointed time and publicity of our Lord's life, teachings, and miracles, next, in the character of his death, as verifying utterly improbable incidents of prophecy, and fulfilling higher ends in the last manifestation of his own Divine character, in his sufferings, patience, willingness, and forgiving benignity and love, and last, in the ensuring the conditions of his resurrection as beyond the possibility of refutation or insinuated suspicion—that these circumstances, we say, were strictly consequent upon the establishment of the Roman empire over the eastern world, as over civilized Europe and Africa. It is beyond question, if such paramount authority of Rome had not then existed in Judea, and in its immediate governing administration, if only the Jewish rulers had held the sole authority, or even if Herod, or one of his descendants, had still been king, that it would have needed a distinct series of providential provisions, and perhaps even miracles, to ensure all the conditions and results enumerated; results, however, which were naturally and directly consequent on the fact of Roman rule. We repeat this statement of the sum of the preceding reasonings, because, we think, their truth has been fully and fairly evinced, and their importance demands that they should be imprinted on our thoughts, as parts of the pre-arrangements of that foreseeing Providence, whose decrees are fulfilled with equal success, whether by direct interposition, or by control of the natural course of human affairs.

We are now to enter upon a wider contemplation. We have to inquire whether, and how far, the same dominance of the great Roman power over the nations of the earth, or rather its comprehension of all nations as one empire, subjected absolutely to the imperial government, and assimilated under the general laws and usages of the Roman administration, affected, in any

way favourably, the promulgation of Christianity, in the first period, of its origin, its weakness, and its struggles. And the answer to this question, however strange it may seem to some readers, perhaps, who may have given less attention to this part of ancient history, in the light here considered, is to the same effect as in the preceding representations, which is, that the existence of the Roman empire, in its established authority throughout the world, alone, under Providence, ensured the facile, uncontested, and safe spread of the Christian mission in the hands of the apostles and first disciples of the cross, throughout the whole extent of the civilized world, during the first thirty or even forty years of its early promulgation. To evince this fact in a complete manner, will require some compass of historical statement and illustration; but it will be one full of interest to the intelligent student, as it will bring us into a closer and more minute contemplation of the incipient struggles and advances of that cause, which involved in its progress the destinies of time and eternity.

The generality of even well-informed minds are apt, in contemplating the first period of the history of Christianity, to imagine that every circumstance, and every power, was actually opposed to its progress; that it had, from the first moment of its promulgation, to contend with every secular authority and influence; and, with respect to the Roman empire, in particular, that it was from the very beginning, as it became in an after period, formally arrayed in express and determined opposition to the movements of the small Christian sect, and brought to bear, if not in public edicts, yet in its omnipresent authority in all lands, its overwhelming power, to oppose the promulgation of Christianity, to contest every step of its advance, and to crush and stifle its elements, in the very moment of their first appearance, and at every suspected point of their influence. How widely different was the fact will soon be made apparent. The origin of this erroneous conception is to be found in that tendency to hasty generalization which besets the mind in all investigations, and the want of a clear and discriminating analysis of circumstances as affecting different periods of history. Because the Roman empire was in its spirit hostile to any Divine mission, and became so, after a time, in actual and fierce encounter, we are apt to think of such encounter as having commenced long before

it did, and that the empire of Rome, as the mightiest, if brought into action, was also practically from the first, the active antagonist, of the Christian cause. Further, the representations given of one proof of the Divinity of Christianity, and justly alleged in the Christian Evidences, as founded upon the fact of its rapid propagation, exhibit the spread of our religion as achieved in spite of all secular opposition, and especially in spite of Roman power and Roman arms. Such a statement is quite true in its general form, and the argument founded upon it, irrefragable in its inference. But it admits of historical qualification in respect of *the first years* of the Christian mission, yet such qualification as no way impairs, or detracts from, the validity or weight of the general argument founded upon it.

Nothing is gained to the cause of truth by the slurring over, or putting out of account, of any facts; and it will be seen that the facts we shall allege, though they may seem, and only seem, to deduct somewhat from the amount of the general statement of worldly opposition to the cross, will emphatically serve the cause of truth in another way. They evince the preparations and interpositions of Providence, in some circumstances which were auxiliary to the spread of Divine truth, and at least, in holding back and suspending, for a brief period, that storm of imperial hostility and persecution, which threatened, while the cause was still feeble, to crush it out of existence, and, failing of this result, elicited by the fires of its martyrdoms, still Diviner evidence of the truth of Christianity. Let us then draw the reader's attention to these first years of the Christian mission, in which it will be seen, that while Rome, as a secular, suspicious, and overwhelming power, was in spirit, and, had its suspicions been but awakened, would have been, in instantaneous and overwhelming action, hostile to the faith of Jesus, it proved in fact, by quelling all independent action in separate nations, and by its own proud and unsuspecting indifference to what it regarded at first with contempt, the very shield which protected the first movements of Christianity—the very authority which ensured to it, for years, a free access to all peoples, a rapid promulgation in all lands.

There is no circumstance more patent, in the early history of Christianity, than the fact, that its first promulgators were permitted to announce their message, even at Jerusalem, without

immediate peril to life, or even successful interference to silence them; further, that they travelled freely into all the towns of Judea, Samaria, and Damascus, and in these places announced their message with such success, that churches in all of them were formed, consisting of numerous converts of all ranks and classes. Opposition, it is true, arose in Jerusalem, but it arose from the Jewish Sanhedrim solely. No trace appears of Roman intervention; on the contrary, the persecution menaced by the Sanhedrim was evidently held in check, and prevented from proceeding to extremities by the dread of the Roman government. After a time, in consequence, probably, of the unsettled state of things resulting from Pilate's deposition and summons to Rome, persecution broke loose for a moment from its restraints, and ended in the martyrdom of Stephen; but it was still Jewish persecution, and the state of affairs again evidently shows, that some restraining power prevented that full, and indiscriminate proceeding for the extermination of the new sect, which the intense fury and hate of the Jewish rulers would have dictated. The rapidly multiplied numbers, now united in the avowal of faith in Jesus of Nazareth, in part might make them pause; but the chief consideration, was the dread of venturing on proceedings which would wear the aspect of a national disturbance, and bring down upon them the animadversion of the imperial government, and the summary intervention of the Roman garrison, posted in the fortress of the Antonia, or of the legions of Vitellius, who was in chief command over Syria. The restoration of the kingly native government in Judea, in the person of Herod Agrippa, a grandson of the first Herod and Mariamne, led to the martyrdom of James; but such proceedings were soon ended by the death of Herod, and the substitution anew of a Roman governor, who resided chiefly at Cæsarea. Persecution was, then, in its worst extremities stayed. It was still wholly Jewish in its origin and character; and the restraints which forbade its worst violences, were imposed by the government of Rome, which at this point dreaded no peril from Christianity, and concerned not itself to know its character and tendency, but was bent on quelling every breach of the peace, and preventing any measures which might lead to national disturbance. Thus for many years, under the shadow of Roman protection, in its general capacity of guarding national tranquillity, Christianity shared an almost unrestricted freedom of utterance, and of diffusion, at the very centre

of its origin, and in the very city and country where its Divine Author had suffered death.

Let attention be now directed to other lands; and it will be seen, that the same marvellous facility of access and freedom of utterance among all nations, were ensured to the missionaries of the cross, in virtue of the same fact, of the existence of a universal imperial authority in every country within its wide range. The apostles move freely, and without question asked, or opposition offered, into all countries, and open their message boldly in all cities; first, it is true, more in the private synagogues of their countrymen, but afterwards in the public places of capitals, in the Agora, or Forum. They travel through Phœnice, and preach and form churches at Tyre and Sidon, at Sarepta and Berytus. They shrink not from proclaiming their mission in Antioch itself, where the Roman governor of Syria held his residence and court; and they would seem to have prosecuted their efforts without the least interruption, and with extraordinary success. The mission appointed thence by the church, into the cities of Cyprus, and of the southern province of Asia Minor, consisting of Paul and Barnabas and their companions, proceeded in perfect security from city to city, except that popular commotion was raised against them by Jews who were settled in such places. We need not pursue the narrative of the first diffusion of the gospel message with minuteness any further; but only remark, that the same fact is apparent through every stage of its progress, and in all points of its aggression throughout the civilized world. The messengers of the cross traversed the countries of Asia, Europe, and Africa, in as perfect security, as if employed on a mission of private adventure, excepting only the perils incident to travellers as such, and still more emphatically, the disturbances raised by their countrymen, the Jews, in foreign cities. Without interference, or even notice, from the political authorities, the apostle Paul openly told his message, as at Troas, so at Philippi, and at Berea, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth.

We may be here reminded, perhaps, that at Philippi, Paul and Silvanus were publicly scourged, and cast into the safest dungeon of the prison; but this was at the instigation at first of their countrymen; and the incidents springing from this very transaction, afford us the specific and conclusive proof of the fact we are wishing to impress, that the imperial power was their safe-

guard; for Paul's claim of Roman citizenship struck fear into the hearts of the magistrates, and they gladly liberated him, and his companion who had no such claim, while they in no degree disavowed, but gloried in the faith of Jesus. The like security attended Paul's preaching at Athens, and his ministration of two years' duration at Corinth. But already, many years before the date to which these references touching on St. Paul's mission bring us, other disciples had planted a church or churches in Rome, and converts to the faith were found in the palace of Cæsar. In other cities of Italy, and beyond the Alps, in Gaul, in Spain, probably even in Britain, in the towns of Mauritania, Numidia, and Carthage, and eastward towards Egypt, the same introduction of the message of the cross, and with the same effects, took place; till, following the line of Roman dominion, we reach Alexandria, where, much earlier, numerous churches had been formed; and passing beyond Egypt into Ethiopia, we find, that by the preaching of the baptized Ethiopian officer of Queen Candace, the mission of Calvary had taken root even beyond the sources of the Nile.

Thus we have carried the reader's thoughts along the line of the first rapid promulgation of the message of Him who was crucified at Jerusalem; and that line embraces, speaking generally, the whole compass of the then civilized world; and it is also the line of Roman dominion. The whole picture, so familiar, and real to our thoughts, from the narrative of St. Luke, and other allusions of the Scriptures, seems also to us, now, to present nothing extraordinary, nothing which involved any singular conjuncture in the state of the world, and the condition of its many and widely diversified nations. The messengers of the cross are beheld in active movement across the whole scene, opening their credentials in every land, and gaining an utterance for their message, and vastly more than this, faith for it, in every country, amongst every people, in every great city and town of the Roman empire. They meet with perils, but they are those of ordinary travelling, and not such as would have arrested their course fifty years before, when pirates lurked in every creek on the Mediterranean, or when, on land, robbers were more numerous almost than the garrisons of cities. They meet with opposition and persecutions; but, in these first years, they are such as spring invariably, or almost invariably, from their own countrymen;



who, destitute of power themselves to persecute, incite, as far as they are able, the Gentile communities to do so. Yet in all their worst perils, they find resource in the dominant sway of the Roman power, which quells all the minor disputes and conflicts of varying sects or nations, and compels the observance of peace.

There were thus imminent perils besetting the life of the apostles at every step they took, from the malignity of their own nation, in the form of sudden attacks or plots for their destruction; and their sincerity and truth were attested in the fullest degree by the dangers amid which their testimony was given; only, it is seen, these dangers sprang not at first from the decrees of the empire, but were in some measure checked by its perpetual vigilance, in maintaining quiet and order. Hence, if we advert for a moment to the bearing of these representations on the statement of the Christian evidence, in its historical part, in the direct testimony of the apostles, they make no abatement of the fact that such testimony was given under conditions of privation, persecution, and constant peril to life; but simply *define the quarter* whence such peril arose, in the first years of the Christian mission, and arose in incessant, perpetual machinations of outrage, cruelty, and death. Such perils and sufferings pursued the servants of the cross in every place, and under every form; and were perhaps more besetting and constant in their assault, from their originating in the hate of numbers of Jews, or of the heathen populace excited by them, in every city. The element of deadly peril, therefore, as encompassing the deliverance of the Christian testimony, existed from the commencement, and attended such testimony at every stage; but, while equally as fierce and fatal, as if proceeding from the supreme political power, it issued at first from another source, and was in some real extent restrained by the interference of Roman rule. As a Roman, or a person enfranchised with Roman freedom, the apostle Paul came forth by even the entreaty of the magistrates from the public prison at Philippi. So, also, at Corinth, when a commotion was raised by his countrymen, and Paul was accused by them before Gallio, this Roman governor instantly dismissed the charge, professing to have no concern with such questions, though he did not interfere to prevent the scourging of Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, now become a Christian convert. His conduct exactly represents this general bearing of the whole im-

perial power towards Christianity, in the first years of its promulgation. It did not persecute; it did not concern itself to ascertain what Christianity was, or whither the movement tended. It, further, generally ensured the freest transit to the first missionaries of Divine truth, and so provided the opportunity of access to all nations. But it did not interfere to prevent individual, or even popular, hostility and persecution, except in the last extremity, when such commotions threatened the public peace.

The history of St. Paul exhibits a picture of continued privation, suffering, peril, and cruelties inflicted, which left sometimes no appearance of life remaining. Thus it was at the hazard of his life he avowed his conversion at Damascus, or afterwards ventured to appear in Jerusalem, or preached at Derbe, and at Iconium, or at Ephesus, Philippi, or Corinth; yet all persecutions came, or came chiefly, from Jewish hate or popular outrage; and his chief and last appeal in extremity lay to the power of imperial Rome. His perils were not less, or less incessantly imminent, for coming from a different quarter; but the persecutions of his countrymen, if he survived their worst outrage, did not arrest his movement from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom; and for this freedom, he was indebted to the existence of a different power, and higher than the separate authorities of particular states—the existence of an empire which had subordinated them all. We may remark, further, that the experience of Paul, as thus exhibited, will answer as the representative of the whole manner and condition of the Christian mission throughout the empire. Yet his history furnishes the evidence, also, that peril ever menaced the life of the Christian missionary *even from Rome* in the casual outbreaks of its violence. The apostles Paul and Peter became at last its victims, and probably all the other apostles, with one exception, were cut off in the same period.

If we now cast a glance over the whole first age of the promulgation of Christianity, the general fact, as illustrated in the history of the great apostle of the Gentiles, will become apparent, that the Christian message had a free and nearly unobstructed range of diffusion and spread, from country to country, into all lands, on the east and west, from its central starting-point, through the whole extent of the civilized world. Its heralds were everywhere exposed to peril, and involved in privation and suffering, but at no limit was there met a barrier to its further

advance; and the law prescribed by its Divine Author became the historical fact in the experience of his servants, that if persecuted in one city, they had still the freedom of advance, or of escape into some other. And so the message of the cross went on, running its swift course, though in much secrecy, through the nations; till in the very lifetime, not merely of the aged John, but of Paul, and of Peter, who ended their career forty years earlier, it could be said, that our Lord's prediction and promise had reached its bright and utterly improbable consummation, that the testimony of his mission should be preached among all nations.

What an astonishing result was this, as attained within little more than thirty years after his ascension; and attained, not in the evanescent form of a spreading rumour of his death and resurrection, which might raise momentary wonder, and again swiftly die away, but in the palpable form of public, earnest assertion from the lips of thousands of missionaries, and in the enduring result of innumerable conversions, and of churches planted in every principal city and town throughout the vast Roman empire! The power of truth, the attendant attestations of miracles, and the influence of the Omnipotent Spirit, alone could achieve such results, in the faith and piety of numberless thousands of converts of every kindred and nation, thus transformed from idolaters into saints of the living God. The grand condition necessary, as antecedent to such results, was that the *message should be proclaimed and heard in all lands*: "for how shall they believe, if they hear not; and how shall they hear, if the gospel be not sent?" It was so sent, and borne by the first apostles and their brethren; but whence were prepared the facilities for their mission; how was the way levelled for their footstep over the whole extent of Europe and Asia; and what had broken down every intermediate barrier among the separate nations of previous periods? The answer to this question is found in the established conquest of Rome over the world. Providence might have prepared for the free diffusion of the gospel testimony in other ways, and by other changes in the state of the nations; but the preparation actually adopted, was in the permitting the levelling result of Roman dominion. Such preparation of an open theatre for the promulgation of Christianity, aided in no sense its *acceptance*, except as hearing

is preliminary to faith. Its acceptance depended on its inherent truth, on its irresistible attestations, and still more essentially on the supernatural working of the Divine Spirit, in sealing the message to the hearts of those who heard it; but the access gained for such message to all nations, and the *hearing thus made possible for it*, were consequences of the inclusion of all nations under the sway of imperial Rome.

We have spent, perhaps, too many words on this point; and yet it may not seem quite so evident to many readers, that there *was* this dependence of the free career of the Christian mission, at its commencement, on the previous changes effected by Roman conquest; and they may be ready to imagine that, anterior to such changes, or without any similar ones, there would have taken place the like rapid and unobstructed diffusion of the gospel, considered simply in its promulgation. Some few sentences further are therefore required, in order to place this in a light, which will leave it beyond all reasonable question.

We deny not, of course, that Providence could effect the diffusion of the Christian message under *any* condition of human affairs, and cause it to surmount any barriers that human policy and power could have reared across the line of its advance. But this is not the point in question. What we have to consider is, What arrangements, supposing it be the Divine purpose to make any existing state of the world subservient, without the aid of miracle, to the free course of Divine truth, could be best adapted to secure that end? And we maintain that a state of the world, never realized before, was attained by the permitted progress and absolute power of the Roman empire, which had levelled all national obstructions, and thus gave free transit and utterance to Christianity, *till* such time as its own hostility and suspicions should be aroused, when its vast and mightiest efforts to crush the Christian cause, *came all too late*. This is the fact we are anxious to impress, both on account of its historic interest, and still more, as it displays the workings of Divine Providence, in the permitted last result of the world's great empires.

We have already dwelt on the levelling effect of such empires, in wider and still wider areas, in their succession, till the widest range of amalgamation, and its most perfect and absolute unity, were attained in the formation of the last one empire, stretching

from the British Isles to the Euphrates. By such crushing and subordination of separate peoples and kingdoms under one sway, every independent authority in each was superseded, and opposition to any proposed mission, if it came not from the imperial power, or was not made at each point, by the imperial administration, could not be ventured upon with effect by any remaining subordinate authorities left in the nations subjugated to Rome. The effect of this great change we have seen already in Judea, in the preservation, for its appointed career, of our Lord's own life, and the development of his ministry. Both would have been crushed on the instant, if the first Herod had been sole ruler of Judea at the time when our Lord opened his ministry; or, if the Jewish Sanhedrim had possessed independent rule, the same result had followed. The Roman administration, for the decreed period, suspended, as, at the end of that period, it consummated, his fate, in the awful death of the crucifixion. In like manner, it was the absence of all independent power in Syria, in Egypt, in the states of Asia Minor, or of Greece, which made the whole range of Asia and Europe utterly free from all effective obstruction, so long as Roman vigilance was lulled by its own lofty contempt and indifference to the progress of the Christian mission. But for this, as, in Judea, there would have been the deadliest struggle to limit and crush the hated system, so, at the confines of every other kingdom, if any of its messengers survived, and escaped from Palestine, there would have been a new and equally determined opposition made to their entrance, and their announcements. Every state, every city, would have been shut against them. The hearing, to be sought for Christianity throughout the world, would have been denied and prevented, unless miracle should interpose; and we have already excluded miracle from our argument. Everywhere, at every point of approach, at every landing place from the deep, at every outpost on the confines of separate states, Christian missionaries would have been cut off, and the advance of their mission arrested. They would not have gained entrance at Antioch, if the Seleucidæ had been in power; or at Alexandria, if Cleopatra, surviving, had suspected their design; or at Ephesus, if no authority superior to that of the city rulers and the mob had prevailed; much less could the preachers of a Jewish sect have shown themselves with safety in Europe; at Philippi, or Athens, or Corinth, or Rome. But the

history of the Christian mission was the reverse of all this. The apostles freely moved and travelled. They were persecuted by their countrymen, and their lives in constant peril from the populace. They were frequently apprehended and arraigned before the city magistracies, or subordinate native rulers; but the power of these was itself controlled and checked by the presence of a representative of the mighty Italic empire. Such representative of the empire was occasionally appealed to; but he dismissed, for the most part, such charges with contempt, being sternly resolved on only one aim, to prevent intestine commotion, and to quell every tendency to disturbance, by the all-potent authority of the empire. Roman conquest broke down and levelled the barriers and organizations which had separated nations, and made action at one point, if permitted by Rome itself, permissible in all. The Roman all-subduing authority shielded the mission, without so intending, from all political arrest or interference; and the chief of the apostles went from town to town under the respected safeguard of the Roman name.

After this lengthened illustration from the history of ancient times, probably the most hesitating will have been convinced of the reality of that preparation laid by the conquests of Rome, for the diffusion of the Christian message; and for its diffusion alone, let it be remembered, or, its opportunity of gaining a hearing; because, for its acceptance and prevalence, we must again repeat, the *other* great positive agencies were indispensable; its inherent evidences, its attesting miracles, and the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit. Keeping this last distinction in mind, let the reader attend to a few observations further on this point, which will serve to illustrate the same fact, by reference to the obstacles and facilities of evangelical truth in *modern* times.

The slow advance of evangelical piety in later ages, and even amid the more earnest activity of our own times, exhibits a contrast of most striking character to the rapidity with which converts were multiplied under the ministrations of the first preachers of Divine truth, and churches were planted in one city after another, throughout the extent of the Roman world, and even beyond it, in Asia and Africa. Before the year of our Lord 65, or 70, there were probably communities, large or small, of Christian believers in every chief town in the empire; and, in the many nations comprehended in its sway, however differing in customs, language, or

civilization, converts were made, who bore the stamp of the same hallowed change, in purity of life, and in the new faith in the unseen Saviour, and the unseen world. Some twenty-five or thirty years sufficed, under the heavenly blessing given to the truth, to cause a new moral efflorescence, in lines or patches, like the green of the freest up-springing vegetation of spring, to appear in every quarter of the known world. No such rapidity in the spread of real conversion has been exemplified in these later ages; and even with the freest and most unobstructed ministrations of truth, as among the millions of our own favoured country, the progress of conversion is slow, and even falls incalculably short of the increase of population. Whatever human causes may be an obstruction to this progress, ultimately we must rest on the fact that the Spirit's influence has not been accorded, in the like manner and measure, as of old; for no believer in the Scriptures can doubt, that, if such plenary influence were again vouchsafed, the like blessed result would greet our eyes in every direction, and we should hear, in connection probably with every instance of a faithful, simple proclamation of the gospel overture, that some, that even many were awakened, and seeking peace for their agonized spirits. Such times will yet most surely come, and the apostolical age shall be revived, or perhaps greatly surpassed, in its moral achievements.

But besides the slow progress of truth, in respect of its converting effect, when, as in this land, the gospel has a fair hearing and utterance; there is also, in modern history, to be seen much obstruction to its diffusion as a proclamation in some lands; and in other lands, the happy removal of such obstruction; both of which circumstances evince, in different ways, the incalculable advantage ascertained by the establishment of the Roman empire for the early promulgation of the Christian message. We see an instance of the insuperable *barrier*, imposed by political power to the spread of evangelical truth, on the continent of Europe, in the lands still held under popish influence, and again, of the *free range* for the publication of the gospel, attained as the result of political conquest, our own empire in the east affords a noble and consolatory example. To those who would deem the advantage of the levelling conquest and power of Rome as nothing, in respect of the free advance of the Christian promulgation, we would put it as a problem, how it is, that with all the influence which any

mission from this country could wield, the attempt has hitherto failed, to introduce even the Scriptures, freely, in Austria, in Spain, in Portugal, and in Italy. Century upon century has elapsed, and not so much as a successful entrance and hearing have yet been attained for evangelical truth in either of these countries—countries so near us, and so accessible in every point, as to their language, and their political amity, if not alliance with this kingdom \* Yet so the fact stands. Let any teacher of evangelical truth make his appearance in the streets of Lisbon, Madrid, Vienna, or Rome, at this hour, and proclaim simply the way of salvation by Christ; and all know that the instant result would be his suppression, if not imprisonment and death. What is it which avails for the shutting up of these states to the access of the heavenly message? It is simply the existence in each of a stern political rule, bent on such exclusion, and successful in their vigilance and proscription. Imagine the apostles to be living in our own age, and to attempt at the sacrifice of their lives the proclamation of their message in these countries; unless miracle protected them, they would each man be cut off unheard; and their efforts to throw light into these kingdoms of darkness would be resisted unto the death. Imagine the same independent power at Antioch, or Ephesus, or Philippi, and the same suspicion, hate, and vigilance against Christianity, to hold rule in each state; and how could it have been possible for Jewish missionaries to find even entrance, or one hour's freedom for delivering their message? Imagine again Austria, Spain, and Italy to become parts of some one paramount empire, whose authorities had not yet been awakened to suspicion and resistance; and, it is easy to see, that any efforts made by the magistracies of each state would become lost and unavailing, under the quelling control of a mightier sway.

Our own territories in India afford, in an *opposite* result, an example of the same interesting fact. But for our conquests there, our missions would have been, at the best, but a series of perilous *attempts* to enter upon separate states one after the other. The abolishing of separate states and kingdoms, has thrown the whole continent of India, from Cape Comorin to the foot of the Himalayahs, open to the free circulation of the Christian message. The access gained at first by Chris-

\* Since these lines were penned, the obstacle has been in part removed both in Austria and Italy.



tian missionaries to the population in India, was confined to the circle of English acquisitions in their early narrow limits around Fort Willian, or to the small neighbouring states, in which the dread of British power gave some safeguard to any adventurous missionary, who trusted himself in more distant intrusion into the interior. Without offering any judgment on the expansion of British conquest in the east, as to the justice of successive aggressions, while it is certain that, very frequently, such aggression was provoked, and advance became often the inevitable consequence of earlier positions, and indispensable to their security; it may still be affirmed, that something of a manifest overruling Providence is discernible in the rapid acquisition of an empire over the whole of India by a remote Protestant power in the west; and the design of this must chiefly be asserted, in the free range acquired for the promulgation of Divine truth, through the length and breadth of the great central, remaining stronghold of ancient idolatry.

The same result has been achieved, in the triumph of British and French arms in China, by the newly-ratified treaty of Peking, which may be expected to facilitate the movement and access of missions, in all directions, amongst the hundreds of millions of the population occupying the furthest extreme of the old world. Who can deny the immense advantage, and large promise, given to the cause of Christian evangelization by these openings and acquisitions in the east, whether of absolute dominion, as in India, or of paramount influence, as in the Chinese population? But if such advantages be real, in the overthrow of the insurmountable barriers, existing in national power and political resistance, which, as in China, so long forbade approach to its benighted population, and deferred to this late age of the world the very first great onset of Christian missions; how can it be doubted, that the levelling of all the nations of antiquity under a single sway, and the extinguishing all separate and independent power in each, was the *very preparation* requisite to take effect, anterior to the forthgoing of the first promulgation of Christianity, provided only, that the paramount, imperial, single authority over the whole world did not set itself to oppose such promulgation at its commencement, and at all points, and in all stages of its movement? Of course, if the mightier power which had subjugated all nations under its sway, and organized all kingdoms

into one allegiance and administration, had itself become the vigilant, determined enemy to the expansion of Christianity at its origin and centre in Judea, such opposition would have been, humanly speaking, fatal to the Christian cause. For Roman power had no rival left to it; and its extensive, perfect, all-pervading administration throughout the world, gave it a sort of omnipresence, so that it stood ready at all points, in every quarter, in every land, in every city and hamlet, to crush and tread out any sparks of truth, if kindled, or any faintest effort and movement offered in favour of Christianity. But we have shown that Rome became not, for some thirty years or more, *formally* hostile to the Christian cause. Its jealousy was, in fact, no way alarmed by the movements and teachings of the new sect originated in Judea. Although, in Nero's reign, persecution broke out at Rome, this was local and temporary, and less the movement of imperial policy, than the outburst of the tyrant's wrath, on any victims that offered themselves as a diversion of the popular discontent and gloom, awakened by the burning of Rome, and other national calamities. And again, we repeat, that Rome itself not being alarmed to resist and persecute, its own existence as a paramount dominion permitted no other authority, either of its own prefects, or of native magistracy, to do so, except in some irregular instances, under the influence of popular tumult. Thus the quiet imposed by the fourth single dominion of the civilized world, just before the commencement of the Christian era, the free and safe transit secured by its administration, the shield existing in its authority, prepared the world as one single platform, for the first free movement of the mission of the cross; and that free access which our arms have achieved for such mission in India or China, the absolute levelling effected by the Roman dominion prepared for it in the chief nations of the ancient world.

This is not to say, that Roman power was knowingly friendly to the cause of Christianity; it was simply indifferent, or rather utterly ignorant, and its jealousy in respect of Christianity asleep, or unawakened, for the first period of its promulgation. It afterwards awakened in all its might and fierceness, and, with all its resources and terrors, attempted the extinction, throughout all the nations it ruled over, of the Christian people, religion, and name; but it entered on this death-struggle with Christianity when the time was past for its effective interference, and when

Christianity had taken root in all lands, and was pervading silently the masses of the people. Neither is it intended that, though Rome was unobstructive at first, and afforded facile access and protection in its general influence, there was no other persecution to test the sincerity of the first witnesses of the cross. There *was* such persecution, as we have much insisted, and it was incessant, and closely beset and pursued the mission at every stage; but it sprang generally from a different quarter, from Jewish malignity, from popular outrage, from barbarous commotion; which, imperilling life, and fatal often, was still local, or occasional, and always liable to be quelled by the dominant authorities. Lastly, to guard against misconception, let it not be imagined, even if Rome had not so quelled and levelled and amalgamated nations, that therefore no chance would have existed for the extension of Christianity. There would have been other openings prepared by Providence, and success would have been inevitably achieved, through its blessing, by the ardour of the first messengers of the cross. Even if kingdoms had remained in their separate independence and organization, and each had been awakened to hostile vigilance against the Christian missionary, incursions into these realms of heathenism would still have been effected, as, under circumstances of the like hostility, missions entered, and their results have survived, in Madagascar; yet this very last example may serve to show, that without miracle, the progress of truth would have been the work of ages; whereas the first promulgation of the gospel actually took place in all parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, then comprehended in the Roman empire, in the short space of some five-and-twenty or thirty years, from the day of its first utterance in the streets of Jerusalem. The grand hearing was thus gained for Christianity in all the Roman world; the gospel was preached for a testimony in all the nations. And this hearing was *all it wanted*; for the *results* of such hearing, in the conversion of souls, provision was made in a higher agency, and in the force of the truth as it is in Jesus.

## CHAPTER X.

## CONCLUSION.

## REVOLUTION EFFECTED BY CHRISTIANITY.

Brief recapitulation of preceding inferences—Wide spread of civilization under the Roman dominion—Yet continuance and intense dominion of idolatry—Necessity of an effort of reflection to realize its presence and power throughout Europe—No symptom or hope of change in the heathen world, down to the death of Augustus, or even thirty years later—The power of Rome, so terrific and wide, had become a new guarantee for the defence and perpetuity of idolatry—Change of view, to the picture presented of the whole Roman empire in the reign of Theodosius, 398 A D.—The complete disappearance of all vestiges of the ancient worship of mankind—The prevalence of the worship of Jehovah in the name of Jesus—Inference; such revolution, and the *endurance* of Christianity to this hour, as betokening its Divine origin—The *tendencies* of all great movements in our times favourable to its advance to entire dominion, as the Fifth Empire of the world.

Our task would seem to be now, in however imperfect a manner, accomplished. We have brought down our review of the great empires which preceded the Christian era, to the period of the consummated conquest, established unity and power, furthest extension, and highest climax of the grandeur, of the last of such empires, which involved the civilized world in its compass. The attempt has been made to trace the descent and ever-widening extension of ancient empires, to mark the preparations laid by each for that which succeeded, and to set forth the results of each, and of the whole, on the condition of mankind, in the widening unity of human families, tribes, and nations, and in the introduction and spread of law and order, and with these, of security, industry, knowledge, arts, and civilization. But more especially, our object was to mark, also, the unfolding purpose of Providence, the verification of prophecy, the bearing of successive empires on the preservation of the chosen race to an appointed period, and of the Divine oracles and institutions entrusted to its keeping. Finally, the object of the whole was to bring down the

advancing stages of human revolutions through each empire, in the preparations continually multiplied for the times of the promulgation of a new faith, and a universal dispensation; and to show, particularly in the results of the Greek and Roman empires, the one by the spread of its language, literature, and intelligence, the other by the absolute extreme of its single dominance, in abolishing separate barriers of nations, and quelling all in peaceful unity, that a condition of human affairs throughout the civilized world was attained, never exemplified, nor perhaps *imagined* before, except in the visions of prophets, or the fancy of bards; a state of the nations critically opportune, eminently favourable, for the free spread and utterance of the Great Message now first to be told to the human race. Provided imperial Rome did not interfere, no other interference of a political, or otherwise of an effective character, was to be dreaded. And Rome interfered not; but, by guarding the public peace, shielded the mission along its career, till a full and effective hearing was won for the tale of the cross through the empire's widest circle and extent. And this was all the vantage needed. The interval of some thirty or more years of freest transit and utterance, over nations banded into unity, and amid a wide-spread internal peace, from the Atlantic to the Tigris, availed fully for the great first proclamation of Christianity, and for the foundation of its new dominion, as the fifth and perpetual monarchy over the world; for no other *world-wide* dominion, *excepting this spiritual one*, ever succeeded to the supremacy of Rome, after its decline and ruin.

If we have enlarged to a disproportionate extent on the results of the Roman dominion, as preparing a wide and unobstructed theatre for the Christian mission, it has been, from our anxiety to place in the fullest light the fact, that in the comprehensive plan of Providence, such preparation would seem to have been the grand limit to which all preceding changes were to tend, in their main and final effect, and because *the illustration of this fact* was the chief object designed in the present work. Under a more general and comprehensive view of ancient revolutions and their results, much more would have to be said of the effect of the last and greatest, the Roman conquests, on the civilization of the world, in giving the nations that repose from internal strife and insecurity, which they had never known in past ages, in promoting

their unity and intercourse, in determining their activity to the pursuits of industry, commerce, and art, and in communicating to the whole vast empire that uniform character of civilization and intelligence, which in preceding periods rose and flourished only in some small single states. Doubtless there *were* such results, consequent upon the *formation of the Roman empire*; and though aided, intermingled, and enhanced very soon, by the infinitely higher moral and even intellectual influence of Christianity, yet the fact of their independent and anterior derivation from the establishment of Roman power, is not the less to be taken account of, as part of the beneficent design of Providence in permitting such wide-spread, and at first oppressive acquisition of dominion by the Italian republic.

In respect of the previously conflicting state of the nations, amid much of barbarism and ignorance in all parts beyond the circle of Greek influence, the formation of the Roman empire, adopting, and *not* extinguishing the civilization of Greece, became the instrument of extending such civilization to the furthest limits of its conquests. Hence, beyond the Alps in Gaul, and southward in Spain, in the barbaric states of Africa, on the Mediterranean, in Mauritania, Numidia, and Carthage, and, passing into Asia, in the interior kingdoms of Asia Minor, in Pontus, and Phrygia, and in Armenia to the very shores of the Caspian—in all these lands, a vast change is perceived to ensue very soon, after the final victories of the empire; and the reader of the history of those times finds himself, before he is aware, conceiving of those portions of the world in *another manner than formerly*, and, almost without warning of the revolution which has silently taken place in the general thought and usages of the nations, becomes accustomed to think of Gaul, or of Numidia, or of Phrygia, as enlightened and civilized provinces, very nearly, in these respects, on an equality with Italy, or with ancient Greece. There may perhaps be something of excess in such inference, at the date to which we here refer, in the last years of Augustus Cæsar; but there can be no question of the fact of such extension of a new civilizing element spreading on all hands, and with increasing intensity, immediately after the conquests of Italy, which, along with much that was oppressive, gave peace and security to the whole world. This was its particular boon, which took place of the previous interminable wars of the separate nations of Europe, Asia,

and Africa ; this was the purpose politically, which, under an overruling Providence, it was doubtless appointed to fulfil. Greece produced the intelligence, literature, and art, which the rare gifts of its leading minds originated ; and the Greek conquest of Alexander diffused these eastward in Asia Minor and Syria, and gave them a new home and centre on the Nile. But its wide political amalgamation was soon broken ; and for three centuries more, the kingdoms and nations of the east were committed to deadly strife and warfare. The Roman conquest terminated these, and gave universal peace, which lasted for centuries, within the whole wide circuit of its dominion. Wars were banished from the vast interior to the frontier limits of the empire ; while within, as we have stated, repose and security reigned, and industry, traffic, commerce, along with education in Greek literature and Greek art, flourished and spread on every side throughout the empire.

But amid these omens of improvement in the condition of mankind, there was no abatement of the dense *moral darkness*, which we have formerly contemplated as co-existing with the spread of Greek intelligence. Idolatry was rife as ever in all parts of the new empire, and not least, in Greece and Italy. The whole picture, in these respects, remains unchanged, down to the moment when Augustus expired, and even to the very time of the death of his successor, thirty years later. All the intelligence, all the valour, all the ingenuity of Italy and Greece, equally with the ferocity of Gaul, of Spain and Numidia, and the imbecility of Egypt, bent before the figures of the ancient idols. Victims were incessantly sacrificed, incense rose in clouds from every shrine ; and, throughout the entire extent of the Roman dominions, the eye can discern no speck, no opening of a better light, one small province excepted ; but darkness, to be felt, and gross darkness covered the nations. No light struck downwards upon human thought from heaven ; no intermission broke the constancy of idol dominion ; no answer was given to doubt, no mitigation to delusion, no hope to misery and despair.

And not only so, but there existed no resource, possibilities, or tendencies, in the *secular* improvement of the ages, for working forth a deliverance into light and hope and moral freedom. The chains of infatuation, or faith, in idolatry were unbroken ; or, if at any links they gave way, it was only to be replaced by faith in magic, or a reckless atheism and disbelief.

To judge truly and fairly of the world's state anterior to Christianity, we must for a moment wholly exclude its revelations and influence from our thoughts, and take our stand in the ancient world in the Augustan age of Rome, at the period to which our retrospection has arrived; and there let our imagination, aided by fact and history, rapidly traverse the scene in all directions, and strive to read its meaning, and to comprehend its portentous character. Much as has been changed since Ninus reigned, since Nebuchadnezzar triumphed, or since Cyrus gave law to the eastern world—much in a wider intercommunity of nations, much in a diffused intelligence, and unspokeably more in a peace which is wide as the earth's bounds, and deep and perfect almost as the untroubled dawn of time—there is a *vast something which is not changed*, but is the enduring presence of that brooding evil on all nations, which met our gaze in the first review of the human history soon after the deluge, whether in Nineveh, Babylon, Canaan, or Egypt.

Through the whole extent of the view opened to us in the time of Augustus, nothing is discernible in the moral condition, or in the religious usages and apprehensions of mankind, that is an improvement, or, to speak more correctly, that is a mitigation of the gloom and horror seen in ages of remotest antiquity. Throughout Europe, no less than in Africa, and in Asia, with the exception of Palestine, *every human being* is a worshipper of idols, and a believer in the power of imaginary deities over man's destiny here and hereafter. Every one—both child and youth, and parent, both learned and unlearned, both obscure and illustrious—every one trembles and bends to the shadows of idolatry, while fearfully observant of all costly sacrifices and offerings, and yet for ever unconsolated in inward feeling, and unresolved of the besetting doubts and apprehensions of conscious guilt. In every home, worship was offered to the household Lares; at every meal, libation was poured to the imagined gods; and daily and hourly, in the gorgeous temples of cities, or in the meaner structures of hamlets, the chief work and business of the day was to fulfil the observances prescribed by the priesthood to their idols.

It is most difficult to conceive all this *now*, at least as prevalent throughout Europe, and as constituting the religious life of all the populations which figure in its ancient story. Yet such



was the fact; and no man laid it to heart, or bethought himself of the possibility of the whole being the creation of an impious fallacy; much less, did any one dream of some change being in reserve, for any subsequent revolutions of time. Thousands of years had passed over mankind, and the habit of their religious apprehension was not in the least essentially unsettled or weakened. The veneration of ages had gathered over their temples, shrines, and deities, and such a thing had never been known, in any period, or of any country, that any people had renounced their gods. Such a thing, if told of any, would have awakened only horror, as of some portent of coming catastrophe to the world, and would have driven the masses only more urgently to their shrines, to deprecate the wrath of Jupiter, or of dreaded Minerva. Thus was it through all Europe; in Italy, in Greece, as in Gaul and Britain, where fiercer divinities were often appeased with human blood. Thus was it in the depths of forests, where Druids performed their awful rites; thus, in the crowded cities of Rome, Capua, and Neapolis, or of Athens, Corinth, and Philippi. And, if we direct our view southward to the Nile, nothing is changed *there*, in respect of the idolatry of the population; except that other names of gods had been imported from the mythology of Greece, and associated to the older monstrous divinities of the race of Mizraim. Everything, we repeat, in respect of men's religion is unchanged; and, while Alexandria is become the seat of Greek philosophy and literature, and her schools are crowded by eager listeners, where rhetoricians dazzle by their subtle sophistry and glowing diction, there remain, on the minds of all, the same delusions which Abraham had marked, or Moses had scorned and confronted, near twenty centuries before. The temples of the Nile are still crowded with worshippers of the bull Apis, or the god Serapis; with worshippers of the crocodile and the serpent, and of the newer names, introduced by a new and conquering dynasty. Such in fact was the prevalence, and enthusiasm of the Egyptian superstition at this late period, that its votaries reared for themselves temples at Rome, and drew adherents, male and female, to their ancient gods, from the gay and polished classes of the imperial city.

No words or description of ours, we are aware, can avail fully to picture forth the dread reality, in all its extent, its pervading force and presence, its absolute despotism over the spirits of men,

and its incessant influence and multiplicity of forms and customs. But enough will have been said to impress, what is our main object, the *fact of its universality*, its dire unexcepted prevalence in the nations, at the end of Tiberius' reign, as in the ages of Sesostris, Belus, or Ninus. Nothing but what may seem needless iteration, or, if not this, the adducing illustration of the same fact and principle from many lands and differing peoples, can fill the whole sphere of view to our own thought, as the wide reality was *then* filled, with the myriad creations, usages, and horrors, of the idolatry of the whole ancient world.

There is only one fact further, regarding its prevalence, which we would wish to set strongly before the reader; and that is, that at the limit of time referred to, such system gave no token of *change*, considered in its power over the masses of mankind. It is true, the growing intelligence and activity of thought in secular knowledge, had a tendency to awaken an order of reflection, of a questioning character, in regard to national religions; but such tendency would be realized only in a few, and would lead to no renunciation, or practical change. The very offering to Æsculapius ordered by Socrates when dying, and the open practice of Plato, or of Cicero, in their conformity to popular observances, and agreeably to the instincts of their own education, may show how unavailing keenest intelligence might be, to pierce and dissipate the falsehood so universally credited and adored. Idolatry thus stood fair for perpetuity and endurance, when Horace left the world, or Livy, as much so, apparently, as when the pyramids were founded, or the temples of Memphis, or of hundred-gated Thebes, received their first dedication by the Pharaohs. If in Europe a new and mightier dominion had mastered all the nations, and prepared a repose and facility for all the enterprises of thought, as of outward industry, such mighty power was not the enemy of idolatry, but its champion. Imperial Rome owed, in her esteem, all her success and power to her gods and heroes, from the god Quirinus, to the recently canonized Augustus. The very eagles which frowned on her standards, held in the grasp of bravest centurions, were believed to embody the auspicious presence of Rome's victorious destiny; and the legions each morning bowed in reverence and in hope before them, and caught fresh daring in battle when they saw their advancing gleam in

the van of the conflict. Hence the vast empire founded on the Capitol, and consecrated at its shrines, became a *new and mightier guarantee* for the defence and perpetuity of the idolatry of the whole ancient world, and of all preceding ages, nearly, since the deluge; and it was prepared to expend its direst force and vengeance in resistance to any movement that menaced irreverence, even, to the faith and fumes of ages. This mighty power, in the height of its pride, in the security of its conscious strength, and through ignorance of the character of one menacing, but very insignificant movement, slept upon its watch; or rather, while keeping stern guard on the peace of nations, it suspected no possible peril to the universal system of *human belief*. In a word, the possibility of any attack on the ancient system, much less, any success to such attack, was deemed out of question. The depth of human faith—as it must have seemed to the sagest observers of that time—in idolatry, and the rooted, absolute character of its rule and reverence, made any suspicion, or even speculation as to its peril, utterly folly to entertain for a moment. Thus firm, fixed, formed for endurance to the latest hour of time, was the system felt to be, by those who were its enthusiasts and observers; and there seemed as little chance of change in the next two thousand years that were coming, as there had been in the two thousand years in which idolatry had gathered strength, instead of waning. What had been, would be for ever; and in the Capitol, in the Pantheon, in the Acropolis at Athens, and on the shores of the Nile, the rites would continue, and songs arise, to Apollo, to Mars, and to the son of Cronus, for all the ages of time.

This is that front of dire reality and fact which, in these multiplied illustrations, it is our wish that the reader should fairly look in the face and appreciate; and, considering the justice of the proofs we have given of the improbability, nay, from human resource, *impossibility*, of change, we will ask, if he can see at that date any sign or presage of revolution in such system. Could he venture his fortune, or any part of it—could he risk his reputation for being rational, by affirming such probability, if, dwelling in Rome in the times of Cicero or Mæcenas, he were asked if he discerned any symptom of change in the world's adoration of the gods? Mæcenas, Cicero, Horace, discerned none such; and the query would only have awakened in them a shudder, as of a sug-

gestion of horrid and accursed omen. The veneration which has been, will be; and the pyramids shall sooner decay and crumble to the last stone, or the seven hills of Rome subside into a level plain, than change can come on the habit and law of the spiritual life of nations, perpetuated from the remotest beginnings of their history.

Let it not seem to the reader an abrupt transition, or one merely imagined for unfair surprise and effect, if, passing over the spaces of some three or four centuries in human history, from the point at which our last references left it, we ask him to turn his gaze on this later period, in the busy life of human nations, and to mark the wide-spread, almost total change.—Where, at this time, is departed that world of Cicero's age—not in its living agents, for they and myriads after them are become dust, but in that empire of venerated mythology, with its endless observances, which occupied the scene when he closed his eyes? What worship is this, which is now offered in the Pantheon, or in the hundreds of structures which meet our glance, as we gaze from the Aventine over the wide-spread city of Romulus? What is that symbol which gleams on the summit of each, or, as detachments of the legions of Theodosius march to their stations along the streets, what means that emblem which hath supplanted the eagle on their standards? Follow the train of a peaceful procession of the inhabitants into the interior of one of Rome's ancient temples; and whence the change in their seeming purpose, and where are the traces gone, of the ancient worship, offered once in bloody sacrifices, and the songs of vestals? No image meets the eye, no great outward splendour draws our notice; but instead, there is before us a deeply thoughtful assembly, including the emperor and his officers, who occupy here no lofty place of distinction; and one venerable man, taking his stand at a desk in the furthest recess, opens his lips, amid the hushed and thrilling feeling of all, in utterances of invocation to a Being unseen, and then unfolds a scroll, from which he reads strange words of forgiving love from the Father of eternity, through the merits of one Jesus, crucified at Jerusalem nearly four centuries before. Anon the voices of praise and song are uplifted, and the voice of Rome's greatest emperor joins its meek response, haply not without the falling tear, in the hosannas which are poured forth to the name of Jesus. And His

worship is at this date, the sole, exclusive faith of the empire; that empire which Pompey in the east, and Cæsar in the north, expanded to its furthest line, and subsisting now, at this year, computed by a new name, 398 of our Lord, without the least diminution of extent, or power, or grandeur; and throughout this empire, Jesus is the one acknowledged Lord and Saviour.

Pass to Gaul, to Greece, to Constantinople, traverse the cities of Asia Minor, pause near the ruins of Jerusalem, go southward to the land of the Pyramids; and what meets the eye everywhere? The same dominion of Immanuel; the same unity of faith and worship; the same devoted allegiance to his Divine authority, and the same prevailing conformity to his glorious example. Mark in Egypt, particularly, the ancient centre and stronghold of idolatry, and you find no trace or memorial of that idolatry, in the belief or fears or usages of men, or even in the thoughts of the myriads spread through its cities, but only in the huge and broken remains of temples, old as the times of Moosis or of Thoth. Alexandria has now its Christian temples and schools, and none other; the last structure retained for heathen worship has either been destroyed, or dedicated to a different use; the last surviving emblem of idolatry has been shivered and cast forth; and in all the cities of the Nile up to Syene, and beyond it, in Nubia and Abyssinia, Christian temples alone are resorted to, the Christian oracles alone are read; the faith of Jesus of Nazareth alone is admitted and revered; and the tombs of the dead are inscribed with words of hope, founded on the resurrection and heavenly glory of the ascended and unseen Saviour. If we glance the eye towards the caverns in Upper Egypt, which give token of the residence of solitary inhabitants, these are the retreats of holy men, who, with mistaken aim, are devoted to solitude, that their whole life may be one of thought, consecrated to the contemplations of Calvary and of heaven.

Do we exaggerate in these pictures? Nay, we cannot by our representations convey a millionth part of the reality of that strange revolution which has passed on the ancient world. We have selected the date of our reference at that moment of the consummation of the triumphs of the cross, when, by the decree of Theodosius, the last relics of idolatry were proscribed and destroyed, throughout the empire, and the voice of an idolater ceased for ever throughout Europe, and in western Asia. We

have ventured on references to the now actual religious life at Rome and in Egypt, as the *extreme* points, giving highest illustration of the mighty change. But it might have been more instructive, if we had seized the aspects of the *advancing* change at its earlier stages, and exhibited the triumphs of the Christian cause in its first struggles, when Rome imperial became at length aware of its progress, and aggressive extermination of ancient beliefs, and strove to extinguish and extirpate it; where, in view of the martyrs encompassed by flames, or calmly awaiting the first onset of tigers; while marking the sufferings of Pothinus and the first martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, of holy Polycarp at Smyrna, of Cyprian in the second Carthage, and of Origen and others near the Nile; or, in an earlier age, while gazing with an awful and wondering sympathy on the lingering agonies of Saul of Tarsus and Peter his fellow apostle, suspended each on a cross, so tradition affirms, at Rome; we might learn and feel that *very lesson* of Divine truth and trust, revealed in the *first witnesses* for Christianity, which conquered all beholders, and, by the power of the Divine Spirit, working with the attestation and delivery of the heavenly message, made very soon all Europe a temple resounding with the Redeemer's praise.

But these meditations, as history, are sufficiently familiar to the reader. Our desire has been to place the contrast of the Christian revolution to the ancient state of the world, in its character, amount, extent, and completeness, with something of vivid impression, before the mind. And, though we may have failed in this, as impression, *the basis of the inference remains*, and its statement carries conviction, without other aid, besides its own simple utterance.—Was the change, we ask, thus effected in the world's history, of God, or of human device and enterprise? Was it the sole energy of a few Jewish zealots, if not impostors, which swept completely away the huge gloom of idolatry, and brought the nations to believe in the one Supreme Deity? Was it man's work, to transform the nations, not only from mental darkness to light, and deep despair to hope, but from moral debasement and sensuality to purity and integrity? The *consequences* of their enterprise continue and survive; and the populations of Europe, of America, of much of Asia, and parts of Africa, are still in professed allegiance to the cross; while millions are doubtless sincere followers of the Redeemer. Is this *endurance*

of Christianity the evidence of a mythical origin, or of an unattested faith? The *tendencies*, further, of all the great movements of our times, are to the consummation of the great Christian conquest, and perfect establishment of its empire, throughout the world, when Christ shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Do these tendencies and determinations, in the Christian church, betoken a faith aided and guarded by no overruling power; or are they not from Him, who hath resolved that they shall be all fulfilled ere long? The hearts of millions now sigh for the world's redemption; but it is a redemption through the name of Jesus. They burn with the same love, they are dedicated by the same consecration to his name, example, and glory, as were the first missionaries whose preaching changed the face of the ancient world; and the surviving flame of love and zeal in the church of the living God, burning with an undimmed lustre and intensity, as when the Vienne martyrs sang in their prisons, announces that it is fed from an unseen source, guarded by a Divine power, and destined to communicate its spark to millions more, till the whole world shall share its transforming presence and brightness.

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